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Hamas Denies Involvement in Alleged Anti-Pope Plot

BEIRUT — The Palestinian Muslim group Hamas has denied any link to an alleged plan to assassinate Pope John Paul II during his recent visit to Lebanon.

"With great regret we read in some Lebanese newspapers ... a false accusation against Hamas," the group said in a statement published by Beirut newspapers.

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Turkey Says Israel Military Exercises to Go Ahead

ANKARA — A Turkish Foreign Ministry official said on Wednesday that plans to hold joint naval exercises with Israel were continuing, despite comments by Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan suggesting they may be postponed.

"There has been no definite date set for joint exercises between Turkey and Israel. Our efforts on this matter are continuing. No information on the matter of postponement has reached us from a military source," said Sermet Atacanli, Foreign Ministry spokesman.

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Turkish Troops Launch Incursion Into Northern Iraq

ANKARA — Turkish troops, backed by tanks, entered north Iraq at dawn on Wednesday to crack down on Kurds, local correspondents reported.

They crossed the Hezil River, which forms the border, at a point east of Habur, at the extreme west end of the frontier, the journalists said.

The Kurdish-populated area of northern Iraq in which the Turks entered is out of the control of the authorities in Baghdad.

The Turkish troops were pushing mainly into the regions of Kanimasi, Metina and Derkar, where bases of the Kurdistan Workers' Party are known to exist, the correspondents said.

Elsewhere, a large number of tanks and armored vehicles was seen at Cizre, in southeast Turkey on the border with Syria, by local journalists.

They were headed in the direction of Habur, the only point of passage between Turkey and Iraq.

Since early April some 50,000 Turkish troops and hundreds of tanks, according to estimates by local reporters, have been massing all along the Turkish-Iraqi border.

The Iraqi government on Wednesday denounced a Turkish incursion into northern Iraq and demanded the immediate pullout

(Contd on Pg. 14)

QAEN, Khorasan Province (May 14) — An earthquake which rocked eastern Iran caused an estimated $350 million worth of destruction and it will take months to repair damaged infrastructure. An old woman mourns the tragic death of her beloved ones in the killer quake which leveled villages near the cities of Qaen and Birjand in Khorasan Province, killing 1,560 and injuring thousands. Photo: Mojtaba Takin

President Winds Up Central Asian Tour

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani wound up his two-Central Asian nation tour, to Tajikistan and Turkmenistan where he attended the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) summit, and arrived here Wednesday.

During his 6-day tour the president discussed with senior Tajik and Turkmen officials.

In Dushanbe, Turkmenistan he attended the 10-member ECO summit.

Meanwhile before leaving Ashkhabad, Turkmenistan, President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani called as beneficial the decision taken by Heads of the Economic Cooperation countries for formation of a particular committee to examine the projects for transportation of Central Asia's gas and oil.

Speaking at a joint press conference after the end of ECO summit, Rafsanjani stressed that the committee will examine ways for transportation of oil and gas to oversees free from political observation and merely with due attention to economic requirements.

Calling valuable all the deci-

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Russia, NATO Finalize Key Accord

MOSCOW — Russia and NATO agreed on the text of a document here Wednesday defining their future relations after the planned enlargement of the Western alliance, and lifting the threat of a new Cold War in Europe.

Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov announced that he had reached a "full agreement" with NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana, and both officials were beaming as they briefed reporters on their grueling negotiations at the Foreign Ministry residence.

Primakov said the agreement, which covered military and political issues, would be handed to President Boris Yeltsin and the leaders of the 16 NATO countries for approval.

Once approved, "the road to signing in Paris will be open," Primakov said.

Yeltsin has said he aims to sign an accord with NATO in Paris on May 27.

Primakov and Solana started their sixth round of talks Tuesday in a bid to finalize the accord, to be called the founding act, which has been under negotiation since January.

"This is a great victory for the world community, Russia and the other countries interested in peace," Primakov said.

Solana said the agreement was "a joint success," and stressed that the negotiations had been "very difficult."

"We worked yesterday afternoon, all night and this morning," Solana said, adding: "I hope the document will be approved, so that it can be signed on May 27 in Paris."

He also praised Primakov as "a tough, intelligent negotiator, who

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Russia to Remain Chechnya's Main Partner

MOSCOW — Russia will remain Chechnya's main partner, both economically and politically, and will be placed ahead of the West and Arab countries, Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov said Wednesday.

"Russia is a great power," Maskhadov, who was cited by the ITAR-TASS news agency, said. "She is close to us and today everything links us economically.

"That is why I am committed to Russia, much more so than the West and the Muslim world."

Maskhadov made his statement Tuesday upon his return to the north Caucasus republic following a visit to Moscow, the news agency said.

(Contd on Pg. 14)



Nazarbayev, Rabbani Confer With President Rafsanjani

TEHRAN TIMES

TEHRAN TIMES NEWS SERVICE
Editor-in-Chief, Tel: 8809500
Editorial Office, Tel: 8810293-5
Electronic Access Tel: 8809437
8809470
Telex: 213662 TTIM IR
224569 TTIP IR
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In the Name of God

Do they not know that Allah accepts repentance from His servants and takes the alms, and that Allah is the Oftturning (to mercy), the Merciful?

(HOLY QORAN) (9:104)

OPINION

Turkey Invades Iraq for Second Time

Around 3,000 Turkish troops, with tanks and artillery, pushed across the Iraqi border early on Wednesday, invading Iraq for second time in two years.

In an attempt to settle its account with the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), the government in Ankara has violated international law and trampled down good neighborliness.

Taking advantage of Iraq's weakness at this stage, Ankara knowingly or unknowingly is setting a precedent for future which will endanger the security of its neighbors, especially that of Iran and Syria.

It has now become evident that the main victims of the incursions are the Kurds who have already suffered enough due to the atrocities of Saddam Hussein and intermittent inter-Kurdish wars.

Turkish troops have not learnt their lessons from March 1995 invasion of Iraq. Fighting the PKK guerrillas by a regular army will not lead the army to a victory. The Turkish military experts must not forget this fact.

Embroiled in a serious confrontation with the Islamist Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan, the Turkish army by attacking Iraq is trying to divert the attention of the people from domestic problems to the PKK issue.

However, it is not a good policy. Instead of resorting to such ploys at the cost of poor Kurds, the Turkish army must respect the aspirations of the people.

Neglect of the people's votes and aspirations will only make the situation more complicated. Algeria must be a good example for the Turkish army generals. Playing in the hands of the Zionist regime and the U.S. will not save them. It did not even save the Shah, the most subservient servant of the United States.



ASHKHABAD, Turkmenistan (May 14) — President Rafsanjani and President Nazarbayev Shake hands in a meeting here.

By Our Correspondent

ASHKHABAD — Presidents of Kazakhstan and Afghanistan in separate meetings on Wednesday discussed the latest regional developments with President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, on the sidelines of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) summit in Ashkhabad.

In his meeting with President Rafsanjani, the Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev said that Kazakh's first oil consignment is expected to be delivered to Iranian Caspian Sea ports soon. He further applauded Iran's cooperation with Kazakhstan in oil sector.

Underlining that there is no obstacle for promotion of Tehran-Almaty relations, he expressed hope that the relations would further consolidate in the near future.

President Rafsanjani, for his part, welcomed the upgrading of mutual relations and bilateral cooperation, expressing Iran's readiness to share its experiences in reconstruction field with Kazakhstan.

Calling the two countries' link through the Caspian Sea a significant privilege to expand bilateral trade ties, the president said that Iran and Kazakhstan are reliable trade partners in the region.

President Burhanuddin Rabbani of Afghanistan also held a separate meeting with President Rafsanjani in Ashkhabad on Wednesday.

ECO summit as the only representative of Afghanistan, he said sentative of Afghanistan, he said that the member states of ECO share the view that he is the only representative of his country and support him as the legal government. The Afghan president also expressed hope that the crisis in his country would soon settle through the restoration of his government's sovereignty.

President Rafsanjani wished for the prosperity and success of the Afghan nation, expressing hope that the official regime of President Rabbani with the contribution of the Afghan people end bloodshed and fratricide in Afghanistan and make collective efforts to help reconstruct the war-torn country.



ASHKHABAD, Turkmenistan (May 14) — President Rafsanjani and President Rabbani hold talks here.

President Condoles His Kyrgyz Counterpart

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani sent a message of condolence on Tuesday to his Kyrgyz counterpart President Askar Akayev on the passing away of his mother.

The president, who was in Ashkhabad to attend the summit meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), in his message prayed for the soul of the deceased and for the health and the success of the Kyrgyz president and nation.

Akayev was unable to attend the summit meet of the heads of the ECO due to his mother 's death.

In the absence of Akayev, the Kyrgyz Prime Minister Apas Jumagulov was leading his country's delegation to the extraordinary summit.

World Leaders Send Condolence Messages on Quake Disaster

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — messages of condolences from different countries continue to pour in following the 7.1 degree quake which hit eastern Iran on Saturday killing 1,560 and injuring more than 2,500 people.

Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands, in a message to President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, on Wednesday, conveyed her heartfelt sympathy with the victims of the powerful earthquake in Khorasan Province.

The Cuban leader, Fidel Castro, on Tuesday expressed his condolences over the killer earthquake.

A Venezuelan relief federation also condoled the Iranian nation and the government, announcing its readiness to dispatch a relief team to the quake-stricken regions to help the survivors.

Meanwhile, the Thai Premier General Chavalit Yongchaiyudh sent a message of condolence to President Rafsanjani on the disaster quake.

"On behalf of the government and people of Thailand, I would like to extend my profound sympathy and condolence to you and to the bereaved families of the victims," the Thai premier said.

Italian President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro sent a condolence message to President Rafsanjani on Tuesday in which he expressed sympathy with survivors of the deadly quake which hit the northeastern province of Khorasan.

Meanwhile, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad and Foreign Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi sent similar messages to President Rafsanjani and Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati on the sad occasion on Tuesday.

In their messages they condoled with bereaved families and the Iranian nation on the disaster on behalf of their government and nation.

Ayatollah Mohammad Asef Hosseini, leader of Afghanistan's Harakat-e Islami Party issued a condolence communique on Tuesday on the catastrophic disaster.

The statement extended Afghanistan people's condolences to the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the people.

A portion of communique read that "the sorrowful natural disaster which took the lives of many and which has left a number of families bereft, has deeply touched and moved me and the Afghan refugees."

It further read, "I deem it necessary to express my deep griefs to you, Mr. president, and to the respectable nation and specifically the bereaved families, praying to the Almighty Allah to bestow the soul of the victims of the earthquake the highest position in the hereafter, the injured victims a speedy recovery and the bereaved families patience."

The Director General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Federico Mayor Zaragoza in his meeting on Monday with Iran's Permanent Representative to the organization Hassan Saddoq, voiced readiness to send relief assistance for the quake hit Iranians.

Zaragoza expressing regret on the deadly incident asked Saddoq to convey his condolence to the Iranian officials and to the bereaved families of the victims.

Meanwhile, in their meetings with the Iranian representative some of the envoys of the UNESCO member states such as the Russian envoy offered sympathy on behalf of their respected governments for the victims of the Khorasan earthquake.

Earlier, in two separate messages to Iranian officials the UNESCO director general and the head of the Executive Council expressed grief over the deadly quake.

Aftershock Kills One in a Birjand Village

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — An aftershock which struck the quake-hit Birjand on Tuesday killed a villager, an IRNA report said.

An aftershock measuring 5.6 degrees on the open-ended Richter scale, the most powerful since the Saturday quake, hit the cities of Qaen and Birjand and their vicinity, in the eastern Province of Khorasan, at 16:14 hours local time (11:44 GMT) Tuesday.

The Seismological Center of Geophysics Institute of Tehran University announced a short while ago that the epicenter of the aftershock was 850 km southeast of the center.

According to Governor of Birjand, Sowlat Mortazavi, the only casualty of the aftershock was in the village Khou niksar where 10 more houses were destroyed by the latest aftershock.

The village of Khou Niksar was badly damaged in the magnitude 7.1 quake which hit the area Saturday noon, he told IRNA.

Qasem Rahimian, an expert at Geophysics Center in Mashhad, the provincial center of Khorasan, also said that 250 aftershocks have been recorded so far, the strongest of which had an intensity of 5.6 degrees.

Meanwhile, an earthquake measuring 4.2 degrees on the Richter scale jolted the city of Tasouj in East Azarbaijan Province, at 05:52 hours local time Wednesday.

The Seismological Center of the provincial capital, Tabriz, registerd the epicenter of the quake 100 km northeast of the center.

No report has yet been received on possible loss of life or damage.

The powerful earthquake of Saturday in Khorasan Province killed 1,560 and injured more than 2,500 people. 128 villages were either badly damaged or destroyed.

Construction of Int'l Silk Road Complex in Qeshm Starts

QESHM, Persian Gulf — Construction work on the international Silk Road Trade Complex in the Qeshm free trade area started here Wednesday.

The complex is to be built on an area of 7,700 sq meters by Iranian contractors in cooperation with French consultant engineers at a cost of Rls.6,000 million.

The two-storey building comprises 174 trade units, restaurants and other welfare facilities.

(IRNA)

Int'l Interior Decoration Fair Opens in Sharja

SHARJA — The International Interior Decoration Exhibition was inaugurated here on Wednesday attended by Iran and 10 other countries.

A total of 14 Iranian public and private companies have put their products on show at the exhibition.

The goal behind the four-day exhibition, organized by Tehran's Municipality, is to raise export of non-oil commodities and marketing of Iranian goods on foreign markets.

(IRNA)

3rd Stage of 'Salman Fateh' Maneuvers Launched

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The third stage of 'Salman Fateh' maneuvers was launched in the Persian Gulf and Sea of Oman by Iranian naval and air forces on Tuesday.

In this stage called "duty officer", the participating forces carried out defense operations against the chemical attacks of the hypothetical enemy, an IRNA report said.

Navy commandos and Air Force fighters carried out military exercises against the hypothetical enemy and its positions in the operational regions.

The joint 'Salman Fateh' maneuvers, code-named 'Ya Hussein-e Shahid' covering an area of 24,000 nautical miles in south of the Persian Gulf, started in Jask Port on Sunday and will extend to the Second Naval Base of Bushehr.

Election Update

WEATHER



هكذا من الأصل

Election Update

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Guardian Council released a statement announcing that as regards the order of the list of the presidential candidates the council has acted according to its usual procedure as it did in the past. The list of the candidates confirmed were announced in the order in which they had obtained greater votes in the council session. The statement added that in this term the council has precisely acted like previous elections.

• Mohammadi Reyshahri: Presidential candidates and their advocates should show the world that election campaign in Islamic Iran is not a war for power but that the main concern is to act according to obligation and safeguarding Islamic and revolutionary values.

• Nateq Nouri addressing the gathering of civil servants: The greater pressure and suffering caused by inflation will be shouldered by government employees.

Among the ominous impacts of inflation is devaluation of national money and capital owners reap the greatest benefit out of this chaotic economy, amassing wealth by dealing in hard currency and hoarding essentials and durable home appliances and selling them with expensive prices.

The workers, government employees, retired persons and pensioners suffer in conditions of inflation for bridling of which solutions should be worked out.

• Khatami addressing the gathering of academicians: Individuals who escape law and logic try to damage others' personality; and damaging the character of candidates is not in the interest of the society. The honorable people of Iran are intelligent and will never be impressed by these un-Islamic and inhuman moves, and will go ahead with their stands and principles.

• Over 500 press managers, writers and officials released a statement supporting Hojjatolelsam Nateq Nouri as the fittest presidential candidate.

• Acting commander of the disciplinary forces: The present condition is of special sensitivity and the world are waiting to see the post-presidential election period to make their comments.

He added that disciplinary forces have not interfered in the election process and will continue to do so.

• Ayatollah Emami Kashani, secretary of the Jame-e Rouhaniyat-e Mubarez: Mr. Nateq Nouri is the fittest for the president post.

• Yazd Province's Friday Prayer Leader, Hojjatoleslam Sadoghi: Many of distinguished Ulama, theological seminaries and political dignitaries back bear witness to the competency Mr. Khatami and consider him to be the fittest candidate..

• Head of the Islamic Propagation Organization, Hojjatolelam Mohammadi Araqi: The free atmosphere of the election cannot be disturbed, but we should be vigilant so that foreign powers cannot infiltrate through friends. We may be distracted in the course of the election on account of the fight contests, and absence of alertness may cause problems.

WEATHER

The Islamic Republic of Iran Meteorological Organization announced today's weather as follows:

Forecast for Tehran: Max. temp. 29°C
Min. temp. 17°C

Partly cloudy with dust and wind

Warmest Point:
Bandar-e Dayyer 42°C

Coldest Point:
Ardebil 2°C

Some cities of the world

Cities	Max. °C	Cities	Max. °C
Riyadh	39	Vienna	20
Istanbul	22	Moscow	18
Rome	21	Madrid	21
Athens	27	Abu Dhabi	37
London	11	Karachi	39
Paris	14	New Delhi	38
Frankfurt	16	Kuwait	39

Condolence Meetings for Iranian Quake Victims Held in Lucknow

NEW DELHI — Several condolence meetings for quake victims of eastern Iran were held in Lucknow, capital of northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh (U.P.), today.

Mahmood Abdi, a youth Shia leader and city President of Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) minority cell, presided over a condolence meeting, organized by 'Pasdaran-e-Islam'.

The meeting expressed deep condolences to the bereaved families and prayed for the departed soul.

In this regard, 'All India Shia Hussaini Fund' also issued a condolence message.

Expressing his condolences for the quake victims, Khan Mohammad Atif, president of city's social organization, 'Muslim Samaj', also appealed to Muslim world to come forward and extend moral and material support to their brethren in Iran.

In a separate meeting, Moulana Hameedul Hasan and Moulana Kalbe Jauwad also expressed shock over the colossal tragedy in Iran and appealed to pray for the departed soul. (IRNA)

UN Committee on Information Begins Session

TEHRAN — The UN committee on information began its annual session on Tuesday, the UN information center in Tehran announced, today.

In a press release received by IRNA, the center said that the session is aimed at reviewing United Nations public information policies and activities.

According to the communique, during a week-long first segment of its session, the 89-member committee will discuss policy questions and focus on progress made by the United Nations systems in the field of information and communication.

The committee will reportedly consider "establishment of a more just and effective world information and communication order, based on free and balanced dissemination of information."

In his opening address, Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information Samir Sanvar, briefed the participants on the work of his department.

He stressed that, despite limitation, the department had made every effort to streamline its operational machinery, forge stronger ties with the media organizations and develop wider a audience.

The committee will hold the second segment of its annual session from September 2-8, and is seen as an opportunity to discuss recommendations on reforms at the United Nations, which are expected to begin by the UN Secretary General, in July. (IRNA)

Nation's Votes to Support Leader's Clamor Against EU



Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The head of the Islamic Propagation Organization, Hojjatoleslam Mohammadi Araqi, at a meeting with a number of the organization's officials and clerics announced: "The seventh presidential election is of paramount significance from various aspects and the people should be enlightened on its sensitivity as an event."

He added: "We should be abreast with international events and be wary of enemy plots."

Referring to the ignominious Berlin court decision, Araqi said the Americans and the Zionists grappled with the European Union and the Germans to resume a wave of intrigues against Iran which will go fall flat and with no clear end.

The IPO chief said the backbone of the clamor of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution against the European Union is the participation of the people in the coming presidential election. The massive presence of the people in polling booths all over the country will be living testimony to the impudence of the European Union as shown in its latest blunder.

He added that at present Iran is in the center of a crisis-ridden region. We witness unrest in Central Asian countries, Arab states, Afghanistan, Turkey and Iraq. Among these countries only Iran is calm and advancing towards progress and development, thanks to the competent leadership of the great Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

Araqi further said that at this juncture Iran needs stability, peace and harmony more than at any other time, warning that the enemy looks forward to entrapping the country by using the special conditions prevailing after a revolution.

Hojjatolelam Araqi said the upcoming presidential election is very sensitive and that "I hope over 25 million eligible voters will participate in the election."

"We should note that the stronger foothold the incoming president has the more successful he will be in implementing the country's programs," Araqi further said.

He stressed that the next president should work for spiritual revival and implementation of social justice, which will guarantee for him the people's popular support.

The head of the Islamic Propagation Organization, reminding his listeners that the special month of Muharram has arrived, said the main threat posed against the country is a cultural one.

He added that the tradition of Ashura is the most profound and deep-rooted cultural tradition adhered to by our society, but that the obvious change in behavioral patterns of the youth is a bitter fact to reckon with.

Hojjatoleslam Araqi stressed that Ashura-type models are needed to enable people to confront the West's cultural incursions.

Iran, Turkey, Turkmenistan Sign Tripartite Pact


NIAZOV


DEMIREL


RAFSANJANI

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Iran, Turkey and Turkmenistan signed an agreement calling for transfer of gas from Turkmenistan to Turkey via Iran.

The document was signed by President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani of Iran, Turkey's President Suleiman Demirel and Turkmen's Sapar Murad Niazov in Ashkhabad where they attended the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) summit.

According to the agreement, Turkmenistan is to annually transfer 30 billion cubic meter of gas to Turkey and then to to European market via Turkey.

Expressing satisfaction over signing of the contract, Turkmen president called the project as economically significant for the Central Asian as well as ECO countries.

Economic experts maintain that the contract will boost economic status of the ECO member states.

Demirel: Rafsanjani's Guideline Can Efficiently Serve ECO Goals

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Suleiman Demirel, Turkey's President told the ECO Summit in Ashkhabad Tuesday that Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani's speech was the most comprehensive report on the 10-nation Economic Cooperation Organization.

Demirel pointed out that if the course of action for ECO's future is going to be based on the guidelines provided by President Rafsanjani, ECO will emerge successfully from some of the obstacles it is facing and the way will also be paved for closer cooperation, IRNA reported.

"ECO is all prepared for entry into the twenty-first century." he added.

The Turkish president, who called for the restructuring of ECO, added that the cooperation between member countries would help boost up the living conditions of the people in the region.

Praising the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railroad link, he stressed that "the extraordinary summit at Ashkhabad is doubtlessly a nascent transformation in the direction of strongly setting up the infrastructure of communications and land surface transportation in the Asian continent."

Iran to Set Up 2 Silos in Syria

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Iranian Ambassador to Damascus Mohammad- Hassan Akhtari and Syrian Deputy Prime Minister for economic affairs Salim Yassin in a meeting in Damascus on Tuesday explored ways of implementing formerly reached contracts.

Among important subjects discussed by the two sides were a cement plant, purchase of vehicle by Syria and exemption of taxation once the commercial documentations are verified, IRNA reported.

Under agreements reached between the two sides at Iran-Syria joint economic commission session, Iran has offered establishment of a cement plant with the annual capacity of producing one million tons of cements in Syria and the latter has called for purchase of trucks, tractors, buses and other machineries from Iran.

Iran has contributed to a tender for establishment of two silos each with the capacity of 100,000 tons of beans.

Yassin said that he would visit Iran in June to follow up the case for establishment of an iron and steel processing centers as will as a diesel motor plant in a joint venture in Syria.

World Telecommunication Day on May 17

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — World Telecommunication Day will be celebrated on May 17. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA), together with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), will mark the theme "Telecommunications and Humanitarian Assistance," United Nations Information Center said here yesterday.

Normal telecommunications come disrupted when natural disasters occur. Hurricanes destroy telephone lines and antenna masts. Earthquake and landslides break underground cables and interrupt electricity. Floods inundate telephone exchanges. This impedes the timely delivery of humanitarian assistance to victims. Emergency telecommunications are therefore needed to facilitate a rapid respond to emergency needs by enabling communications among headquarters, field offices and emergency teams.

Today's technology makes instant communication possible everywhere in the world. In practice, however, humanitarian assistance workers in crisis situations face many obstacles. National regulations in many countries still hamper the full use of the tools which the telecommunications industry can provide to those who work to alleviate the human suffering caused by disasters.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

The following table shows the foreign exchange rates in rials as released by the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Wednesday, May 14, 1997.

COUNTRY	UNIT	Floating Rates BUY	Floating Rates SELL	Export Rates BUY	Export Rates SELL
Australia	dollar	1,366	1,374	2,345	2,357
Austria	schilling	146	147	251	252
Belgium	(100) francs	4,986	5,014	8,559	8,602
Canada	dollar	1,261	1,268	2,165	2,175
Denmark	krone	270	272	464	466
France	franc	305	307	524	526
Germany	mark	1,028	1,024	1,764	1,773
Holland	guilder	914	919	1,569	1,577
Italy	(100) liras	104	105	178	179
Japan	(100) yen	1,418	1,427	2435	2,447
Sweden	krone	227	229	390	392
UAE	dirham	476	479	818	820
UK	pound	2,839	2,849	4,855	4,898
U.S.	dollar	1,750	1,755	3,000	3,015

Future of Sino-Iranian Oil Cooperation Bright

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - A Chinese petroleum official has described the future of bilateral cooperation between Tehran and Beijing in the field of oil as bright.

Speaking at the threshold of the visit by the Iranian Oil Minister Gholamreza Aghazadeh to China, the Deputy Chairman of the Chinese Oil Company, Wu Yao Wen told IRNA correspondent in Beijing yesterday that China welcomes the participation of Iran in the exploration of oil.

He said that China is prepared to manufacture equipment relating to the oil industry in Iran through joint investment with Iran.

He also announced China's eagerness to participate in the exploration and extraction of oil in the continental shelf of Iran.

H assessed the setting up of an oil refinery in China under joint Tehran-Beijing investment, as useful in promoting bilateral oil cooperation.

According to Wu, in view of the growth in Chinese economy, the need for oil has been continuously increasing and Beijing is willing to import a large part of its oil requirement from Iran.

He added that China is ready to meet Iran's requirements in petroleum equipment.

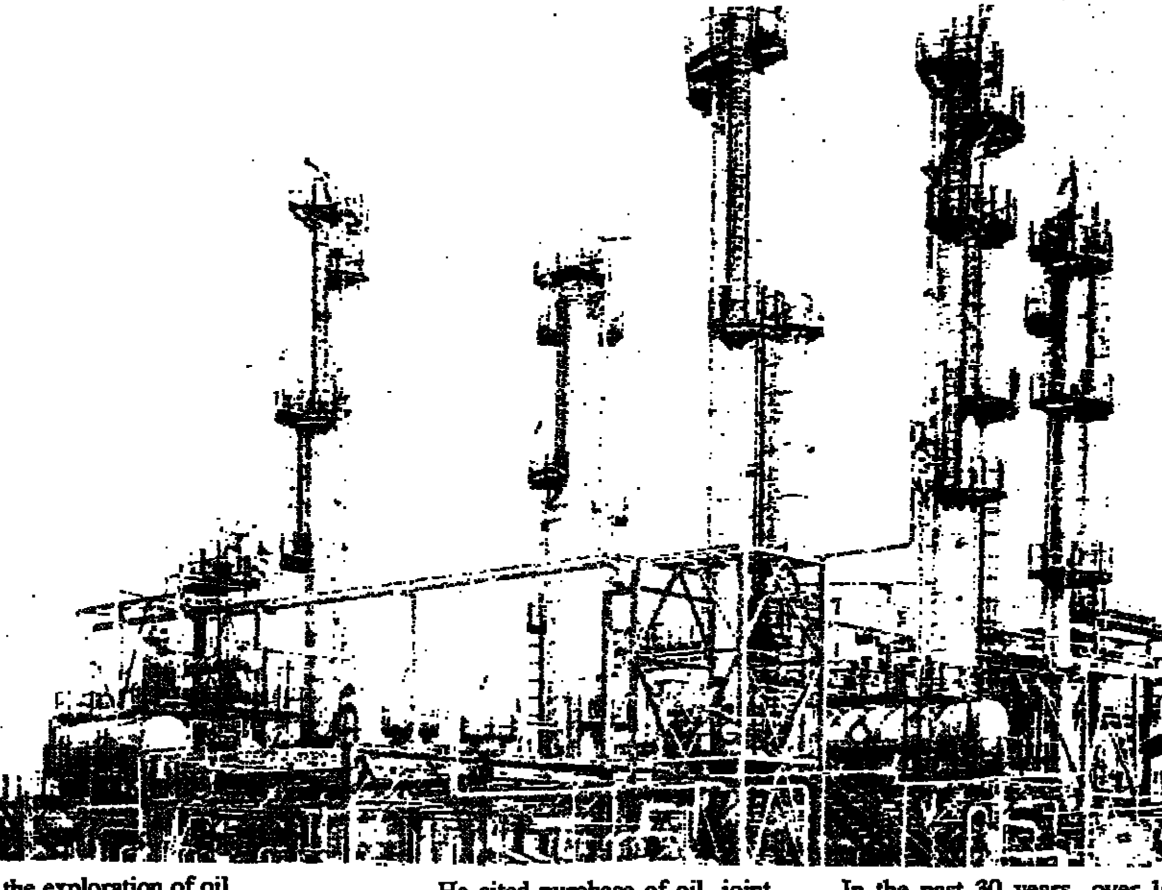
He said that the cooperation between Iran and China in oil industry is in no way related to any third country and nobody can interfere in relations between the two countries.

He cited purchase of oil, joint cooperation in the exploration of oil, production of equipment for oil industry and joint investment in oil industry as the main axes of upcoming talks between the oil officials of Iran and China next week.

Wu said at present, the Chinese oil company has 1000 drilling equipment and 270 groups of geologists produces machinery and equipment of the oil industry.

The company produces 17 billion cubic meters of gas and 150 million tons of crude oil annually which is equivalent to 90 percent of China's oil production. The remaining 10 percent of China's oil production or 15 million tons is produced by the China Sea Oil Company.

According to Wu Yao Wen, the Chinese Oil Company has to date signed 30 contracts worth $800 million with foreign oil companies for exploration and geological survey within the country.



In the past 30 years, over 16 billion tons of oil reserves have been discovered in China out of which 2.3 billion tons have remained.

He said in spite of the fact that the oil production in China shows an annual surplus of between two and five million tons, the country's import of oil rises every year due to economic progress. It is predicted that the figure will reach 20 to 30 million tons by the year 2000.

Work Starts on a Multi-Billion Dollar Gas Liquefaction Venture

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Qatar's Crown Prince, Sheikh Jassem ibn Hamad al-Thani, on Monday laid the first stone of the 3.4 billion-dollar Ras Laffan Liquefied Gas Co. (RASGAS), the official Qatar News Agency (QNA) announced, as quoted by an AFP report.

The complex is located in the Ras Laffan industrial city, in the northeast of the Qatari Peninsula, next to the Qatar gas Complex, another liquefied natural gas (LNG) venture which came on stream last December, QNA added.

"It is one of the most important projects in the Middle East," said RASGAS Chairman, Yussef Hussein Kamal, estimating the cost of the project at 3.4 billion dollars. "It is of a great importance for the state of Qatar."

RASGAS is due to come on stream in July 1999, with the first shipment to be exported to the Korea Gas Corporation (KGC). The South Korean company signed in 1995 a sales and purchase accord with RASGAS covering 2.4 million tons-per-year, and has agreed in principle to double this amount.

"Negotiations are at an advanced stage for KGC to raise its imports to 4.8 million t/y," said Kamal, who is also undersecretary of the finance, economy and trade ministry. "RASGAS has also deployed marketing efforts in Japan, Taiwan, China, Thailand, Turkey, India and Lebanon."

RASGAS will produce initially 5 million t/y and has plans to increase output to 10 million t/y at a later stage.

Japan's JGC corporation and the MW Kellog Company of the United States have been awarded the contract to build the liquefaction plant.

The package to build the platform on the giant offshore north field has been given to the US-French company McDermott ETPM and Japan's Chiyoda Corporation, while two Italian companies, Saipem and Snamprogetti, have taken the contract to build an underwater pipeline running from the reservoir to the plant.

The state-owned Qatar General Petroleum Corporation (QGPC) has a 66.5 percent stake in RASGAS, the U.S company Mobil 26.5 percent, and Japan's trading houses ITOCHU Corporation and Nissho Iwai respectively four and three percent.

Qatar plans to double its revenue in ten years by tapping its gas reserves, the world's third largest after Russia's and Iran's, estimated at 10,000 billion cubic meters (350,000 billion cubic feet).

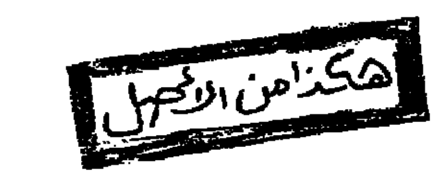
China's Exports Up 27%

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Chinese exports in the January-April period grew 27 percent from the same period last year to 50 billion dollars, a newspaper reported Wednesday.

Imports, on the other hand, totaled 40 billion dollars, down 0.5 percent, said the *Economic Daily*, citing a general administration of customs report.

Of the total exports, those by state-owned industries accounted for 56 percent, or 28.3 billion dollars, and exports by foreign funded enterprises for 41 percent, or 20.7 billion dollars, it said.



هکذا من الأصل

Sampras and Chang Go Out in First Round

ROME — The clay courts of Europe continue to bring out the worst in America's top players.

Pete Sampras and Michael Chang, ranked Nos. 1 and 2 in the world, lost in straight sets Tuesday at the Italian Open — the first time in the tournament's history that the top two seeds went out in the first round.

Sampras, who has always struggled on clay, was jeered in his error-filled 7-6 (7-5), 6-4 loss to fellow American Jim Courier — his second consecutive clay-court defeat this season.

Chang, who also prefers hard courts to clay, was ousted by 54th-ranked Hernan Gumy of Argentina 6-3, 6-2 for his second straight first-round loss on the slow surface.

Escaping the upset trend were fourth-seeded Yevgeny Kafelnikov, No. 6 Goran Ivanisevic, No. 11 Boris Becker and No. 14 Tim Henman. But two top clay courters, No. 13 Felix Mantilla and Andrei Medvedev, were eliminated.



ROME, Italy (May 13): American Pete Sampras returns a backhand to his U.S. opponent Jim Courier during their second round match of the Italian Open Tennis Tournament in Rome.

(AFP PHOTO)

Sampras, who won the Italian Open in 1994 but lost in the first round in his last appearance in 1995, drew whistles of derision from the crowd as he committed a slew of unforced errors to fall behind 5-1 in the second set.

"It makes it more difficult to play when they're hissing like that," said Sampras, who had 36 unforced mistakes for the match. "Maybe it looks like I'm not trying when I'm not playing well. When you're not playing well, they're going to get on you. It's not all that fun."

Sampras finally picked up his game — cutting down on errors and hitting more freely on his groundstrokes — and won three straight games to close to 5-4. But it was too late, and Courier served out the match to beat Sampras for the first time in their last eight meetings.

Courier said he was determined to withstand the late rally, recalling that Sampras had rallied from two sets down to beat him in five at the Australian Open in 1995 and last year's French Open.

"In the past, I've beaten myself rather than him beating me," Courier said. "Today he was going to have to beat me. He wasn't going to get any help from me."

Not long ago, a Sampras-Courier match would have been a final. But Courier, a former two-time Italian and French Open champion, has dropped to No. 24 in the rankings and was unseeded this year.

"With Pete, I'd rather play him in the first round than later," Courier said. "He gets more dangerous in the later rounds."

Sampras said, "This was the toughest draw either of us could have faced. Hopefully, it won't happen again at the French Open."

The French Open, the only Grand Slam tournament Sampras hasn't won, starts in two weeks. Sampras, who also lost his first match at the Monte Carlo Open last month, will play in next week's world team cup in Duesseldorf, Germany, to prepare for Paris. Last year, Sampras had virtually no clay-court preparation but reached the semifinals of the French.

"Being 0-2 on clay this year doesn't help," he said. "But it doesn't worry me considering what happened last year. I'm not going to go in there and think I can't win there. I think I can."

Gumy, who upset Courier in the second round here last year, pulled another surprise by eliminating Chang with ease.

Chang has won four tournaments this year, including a clay-court event in Orlando. But he lost in the first round on clay in Atlanta and looked ill at ease on Rome's red clay.

Chang said he had trouble adjusting to the European clay after playing on hard courts in the United States and Asia.

"I don't feel like I've made that transition yet," he said. "It is always frustrating when you realize it's not going to kick in right away."

In other matches, Becker — playing only his ninth match of the year while recovering from a wrist injury — saved a set point at 6-5 in the first set and powered to a 7-6 (7-3), 6-2 win over Italy's Andrea Gaudenzi.

Kafelnikov, the French Open champion still looking to regain his top form after a three-month layoff with a broken finger, edged Spain's Javier Sanchez 7-5, 7-6 (7-5).

Ivanisevic needed 10 match points — four in the second set and six in the final game — before finally subduing Australia's Mark Woodforde 6-2, 6-7 (10-8), 6-4.

Other Australians fared better, as Pat Rafter surprised Spain's Mantilla 6-1, 3-6, 6-4, and Scott Draper knocked out Medvedev — winner of last week's German Open — 7-5, 6-3.

Britain's Henman saved three match points in the second set against Roberto Carretero, who then retired with a leg injury trailing 0-2 in the third.

(AP)

ROTTERDAM, Netherlands (May 13): FC Barcelona's Brazilian striker Ronaldo trains at the Feijenoord Stadium in Rotterdam as teammate midfielder Spanish Guillermo Amor, on the eve of their European Cup Winners' Cup final match vs. Paris Saint Germain.

(AFP PHOTO)

Juninho Poised to Sign for Athletico Madrid

MADRID — Juninho is set to sign with Athletico Madrid announced the Brazilian on Wednesday.

The Middlesborough star is to travel to Madrid to talk with the club less than 24 hours after playing in the FA Cup final on Saturday against Chelsea.

"It would be a pleasure to play for Athletico Madrid," said the 24-year-old on a radio sports program.

"I will have no difficulty in playing in Spain. After all I was able to adapt to the toughest league in the world — the English premiership," he added.

The Brazilian star believes that first division football will harm his international prospects and says his career must come before loyalty to relegated Boro.

"I had to think of my career. I am still young, only 24," said Juninho earlier this week on receiving the club's player of the year trophy.

"I have to do what is best for me. It's important that I play for Brazil and a new player comes through every month, which makes it difficult for everyone.

"It would be no good for me to be in the nationwide league.

"I came here to help Boro win things. We still have a chance of doing that by beating Chelsea and lifting the FA Cup," added Juninho.

(AFP)

Understanding Kung Fu as Described by a Master

By [illegible]

Skills of Kung Fu

(Part 39)



You cannot always adopt a planned challenge since it is not possible for you to select some attacks in advance. Precision while performing movements is not an intrinsic quality and like other skills it should be acquired and learned. Practice is a must and you should not ignore it. Meanwhile, when you exercise seriously, you enjoy high power and skill while facing an opponent. The hands play a vital role in a fight. They are like a gladiator's shield and sword. The hands are much brisker than the legs and they can quickly move in different directions. A person who is skillful in hand techniques can often be the winner. But some have not learned how to use their hands.

Although gloves and other safety wear are nuisance, they are the best means for you to acquire experience in various statuses of a real challenge. For instance, safety helmet may deprive you of a good sight and gloves seem heavy and troublesome. However, try to use them to perform different techniques. On the other hand, you should avoid getting accustomed to them in order to be brave in defense techniques.

You have to keep up your guard in an appropriate position, i.e. not lower than your elbow since your face and trunk will become defenseless and not much upper because the lower part of your body becomes vulnerable and also you cannot punch swift and direct fists and on the other hand you do not enjoy a good sight.

Standing for long on sides prevents you from using your back hand for defense and offense. Face-to-face standing prevents the fast movement forward and backward and also endangers the vulnerable part of groin.



Punching fist in an open guard is powerless and futile since you are not able to enjoy the perfect rotation of joints. Also you cannot make an attack and defend quickly and your front leg can be easily hit by your rival. If you keep your legs too close together, you lose your balance and it is too difficult for you to punch crushing fists. Never lean backward when you fist because they enjoy no power. In other words, you can punch a good fist when your body is straight and balanced and your body's weight is transferred to the front leg. Also, it is not effective when you are moving backward. The other wrong habit is to bend forward and then fist.

Meanwhile, you have to have the capability to shift from a defensive position to an offensive position and vice versa.

International Aid Poured in for Quake Victims

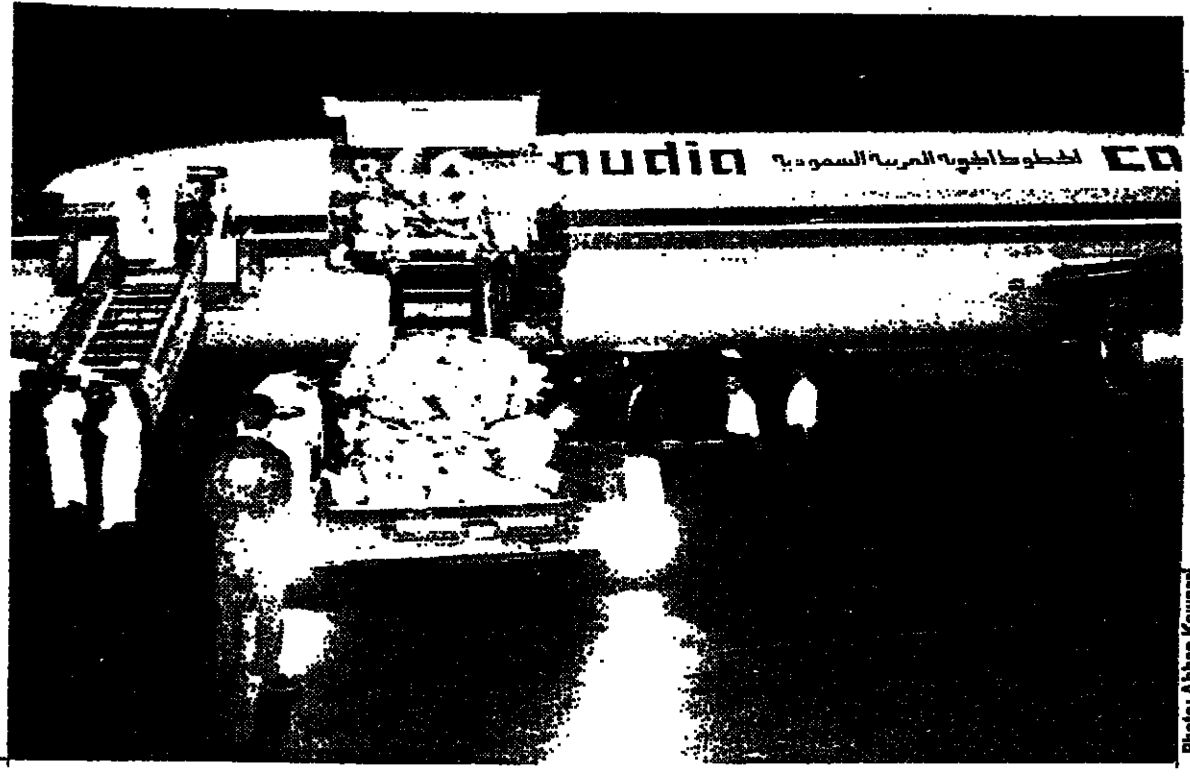


Photo: Abbas Kowsari

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Different countries contributed in aid for the survivors of the devastating tremor which hit Khorasan Province last Saturday.

Among the donors countries, was Saudi Arabia which dispatched two planes loaded with humanitarian aid on Tuesday:

Meanwhile Saudi Prince Amir Talel bin Aziz donated $100,000 to the quake victims.

The first Russian cargo plane carring 40 tons of flour as emergency aid for the quake-stricken people of Khorasan Province of Iran arrived here on Wednesday.

Russia is also to send another planeload of 12 tons of medicines and tents to Iran on Friday.

The Russian Ministry of Civil Defense, emergencies and natural disaster announced its readiness to transfer its expertise to Iran for prediction of quake in order to minimize its destruction.

A charity organization affiliated to the government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) announced Tuesday that it has allocated $410,000 in aid to the survivors of the quake.

The organization, in a statement, added that a relief team will visit the Iranian quake-stricken regions soon to supply the needs of the survivors.

Meanwhile, Dubai and Oman have sent planeloads of relief supplies including foodstuff, medicine, blankets and tents to the quake-hit areas.

The Red Crescent Society of Khorasan Province Wednesday announced that 15 planeloads of relief supplies from Egypt, Syria, Oman, Jordan, Kuwait, France, Tajikistan and Pakistan landed in Mashhad on Tuesday.

Tents, blankets, rice, powdered milk, canned food, medicines, biscuits, sugar and dates are major items sent to the survivors, the society added.

The British government is funding specialist equipment in response to a direct request for emergency assistance for the tens of thousands of victims from last weekend's earthquake in the Iranian northeast province.

The department for international development said it was providing £112,442 to pay for five water tanks, emergency shelters, blankets, plastic sheeting and tarpaulin being flown out by British charity Oxfam on Friday.

This is in addition to an initial donation of £100,000 which the UK government gave to the Iranian Red Crescent Tuesday for disaster relief.

A spokesman said Wednesday that it was paying for the equipment and transport costs from the charity's warehouse in Oxfordshire, central England, in response to a request for the material from Iran.

A spokeswoman said that it already had four personnel based in Iran already working in the stricken region. She said the agency had already emptied its Mashhad warehouse of medical supplies and was also sending all the materials from its Tehran warehouse.

Supreme Court Hears Demands to Prosecute Netanyahu

BAIT-UL-MOQADDAS — The Supreme Court heard petitions Wednesday to prosecute Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and two of his political allies for fraud in an influence-peddling scandal.

Israel's High Court is notoriously activist and independent, and a ruling to force charges against the prime minister would likely bring down the government, though technically he could remain in office until convicted.

"I expect a positive response from the High Court," said Ofir Pines, an legislator from the opposition Labor Party who filed one of the nine motions. "The judges should be gutsy." *(AP)*

(Contd From Pg. 1)

TURKEY...

Erbakan, modern Turkey's first Islamist prime minister, suggested earlier that the exercises, part of a military accord between the two countries, might be postponed, according to the state-run Anatolian news agency.

But he gave no details and it was not clear what kind of postponement he was referring to.

NATO member Turkey has signed two military accords with Israel allowing Israeli military jets to use Turkish airspace for training flights and to upgrade its own ageing F-4 fighters in Israel. *(Reuter)*

(Contd From Pg. 1)

RUSSIA TO...

Chechnya and Russia signed a landmark peace treaty at the Kremlin on Monday paving the way for a normalization of ties despite Chechnya's unresolved status.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who sent thousands of Russian troops into Chechnya in December 1994 to crush the independence movement there, pledged never again to use force against the small, mainly Muslim republic in the north Caucasus.

The treaty, on "peace and the principles of relations between Russia and the Republic of Ichkeria" — the Chechens' name for their republic — was aimed at building on a cease-fire deal signed in August, which halted 21 months of fighting between federal troops and separatist guerrillas. *(AFP)*

Russia, NATO Finalize Key Accord



(Contd From Pg. 1)

defended the interests of his country."

Yeltsin also spoke to Solana by telephone Wednesday, ITAR-TASS reported.

The Russian president, who has previously warned that NATO enlargement could trigger a new cold war-style division of Europe, discussed the issue by telephone Tuesday with British Prime Minister Tony Blair and German chancellor Helmut Kohl.

He held similar talks Monday with French President Jacques Chirac.

Russia remains strongly opposed to NATO's plan to take in some former Soviet bloc countries in central and eastern Europe. *(AFP)*

Highlights

UNITED NATIONS — Israel on Tuesday flatly rejected a demand by Arab states to pay almost two million dollars in damages to compensate for the Israeli shelling of a UN compound in southern Lebanon.

CAIRO, Egypt — Syria on Wednesday encouraged Turkey's Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan, to block planned naval exercises involving Turkey, Israel and the United States this summer.

ANKARA — Turkey's pro-Islamic Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan on Tuesday appointed new trade and health ministers to replace two dissident conservatives who resigned from the Cabinet last month.

CAIRO — The Palestinians on Tuesday called on Arab countries neighboring Israel to join together in putting pressure on the Zionist state to back down on its hardline policies.

MARJAYOUN, Lebanon — Israeli troops killed one Hezbollah activist and wounded another in a clash Wednesday in southern Lebanon, security officials said.

TEL-AVIV — Israel's opposition Labor Party adopted a new platform Wednesday backing Palestinians' right to self-determination and an independent state, party officials said.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

HAMAS...

Lebanese Interior Minister Michel Murr said Tuesday that interpol in Canada and Italy informed Beirut, one day before the Pope's arrival, that an attack was planned against the pontiff during his May 10-11 visit.

The Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) said such reports were "created and spread by services that are hostile to us and to every Arab."

The group said it "never raised its arms in the face of anyone other than the (Israeli) occupier of our land and the violator of our rights. There is no other enemy to our Arab and Islamic people besides the Zionist enemy."

"Lebanon has warmly hosted our people," it said.

"Hamas cannot but be loyal ... and cares for its civil peace," the group said.

Hamas accused Israeli intelligence of connecting its name with the alleged plot and of spreading such "rumors" to harm Lebanon's peace and relations with the group. *(AFP)*

(Contd From Pg. 1)

PRESIDENT...

sions taken by the ECO summit, the president said that implementation of all the provisions of the final declaration of ECO members is of great importance for those landlocked regional countries which have difficulties in exporting their resources to the free world and those Central Asian countries which had to link with the world via the former Soviet Union.

Turkish President, Suleyman Demirel, who was also present in the joint press conference said that the projects approved in the final declaration are transnational projects implementation of which will help materialization of ECO's long-term objectives.

Regarding the prevailing crisis in Afghanistan, the Uzbek President, Eslam Karimov, said that he expected Pakistani Premier, Nawaz Sharif to explicitly reject support for Taleban.

Afghan President Burhanudin Rabbani also expressed hope that the world help settle the Afghan crisis.

President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani wound up his two-Central Asian nation tour, to Tajikistan and Turkmenistan where he attended the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) summit, and arrived here Wednesday.

During his 6-day tour the president discussed with senior Tajik and Turkmen officials.

In Dushanbe, Turkmenistan he attended the 10-member Eco summit.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

TURKISH...

of Turkish troops chasing Kurdish separatist guerrillas.

"The Iraqi government strongly denounces the latest Turkish military aggression and the violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq by Turkish military forces," a Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

"Iraq demands that the Turkish government immediately withdraw its troops from Iraqi territory," the official INA news agency quoted the spokesman as saying. *(AFP)*

(Contd From Pg. 6)

THE LAST NIGHT

Zainab, Sukainah, Layla, al-Rabab and al-Baqir (AS) his nephew. He made his last will, as he decided to water the orchard of Islam with his own blood. They were now alone, in a faraway land, surrounded by an increasing army, as Ubaidullah sent even more armed men. They were besieged by horses, darkness and a huge host. The Postle of Allah (S) was at the great distance of Madinah, along with Imam Hassan (AS) and his mother al-Zahra' (AS). They were two-months' travel by camel from Madinah. As for their father the Commander of the Faithful, Ali (AS), he was resting at peace in nearby Najaf.

The last night passed quickly and Friday, the day of Ashura' — that horrific day — finally came. The spears and swords were prepared to mince and mutilate the bodies of Hussein (AS) and his companins.

Umar bin Sa'd mobilized his army. He put Amru bin al-Hajjaj at the head of his right flank. Shimr bin Thil-Jawshan was in command of the left wing. Urwah bin Qays was in charge of the cavalry, while Shabath bin Rib'i was leading the foot soldiers. He gave the standard to his retainer Duraid.

Imam Hussein (AS) surveyed the huge force confronting him. He never budged, nor did he rethink his position. He was as before, calm and imperturbable. That noble band was as they were described by a poet:

They wore their hearts on their armour and were competing to lay down their lives...

He raised his hands in prayer to Allah, the Exalted:

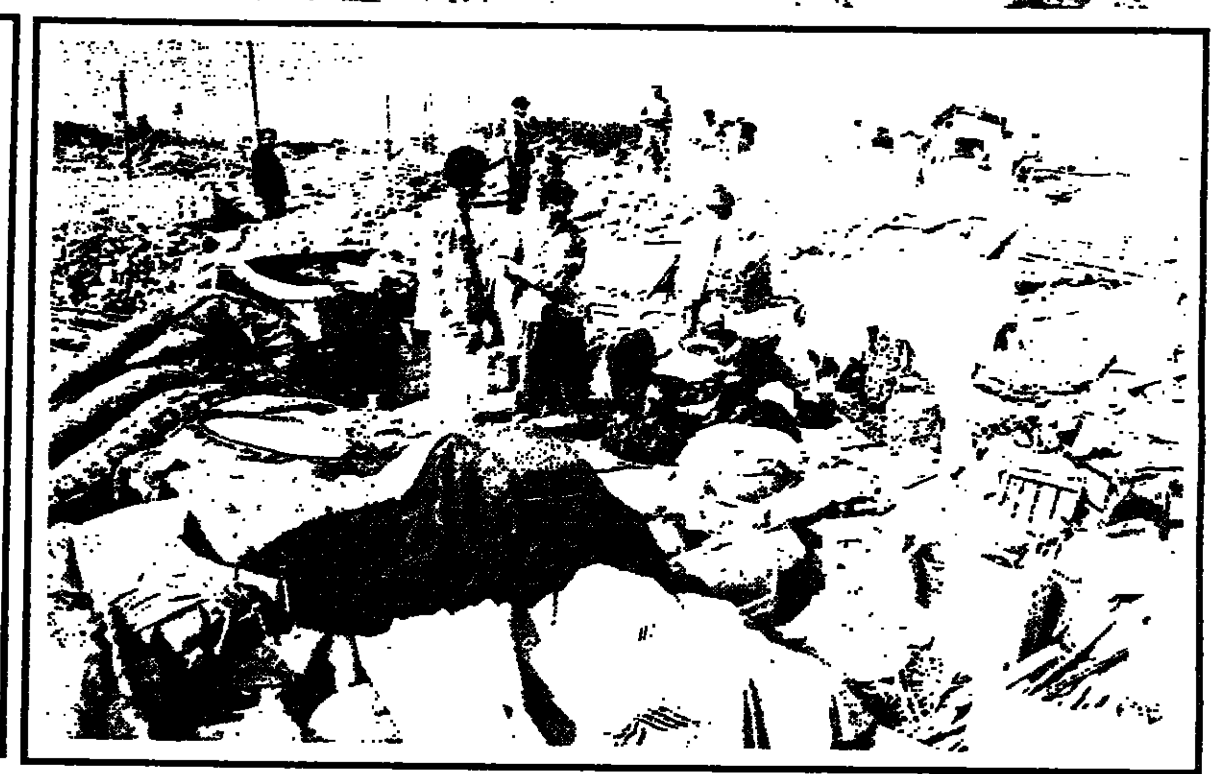
"O Allah, it is You in Whom I trust amid all grief. You are my hope amid all violence. You are my refuge and provision in every-thing that happens to me. How many grievances that weaken the heart, leaving me with no means to handle them, during which the friend deserts me and the enemy rejoices in it. I lay it before you and complain of it to you, because of my desire in You. You alone. You relieve me of it and remove it from me. You are the Master of all grace, the Possessor of all goodness and the Ultimate Resort of all desire."

Killer Quake in Photos

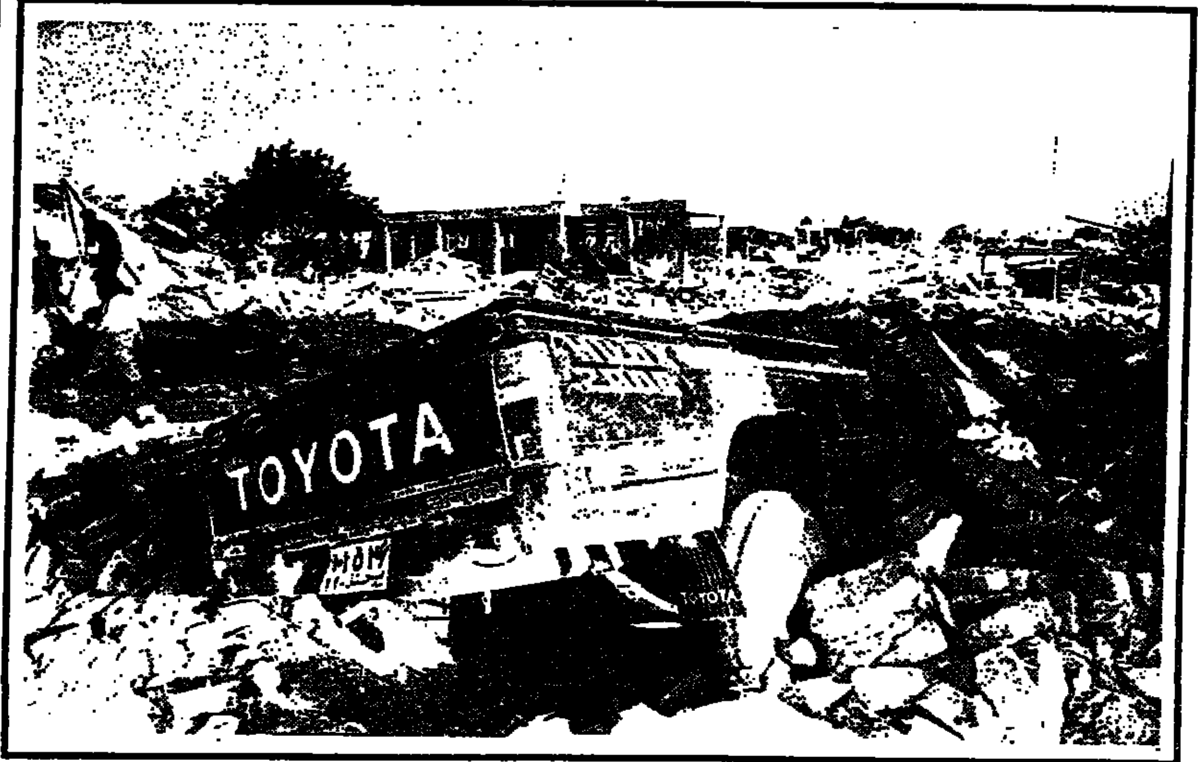
(Photos by Mojtaba Takin & Kaveh Ahmadi)

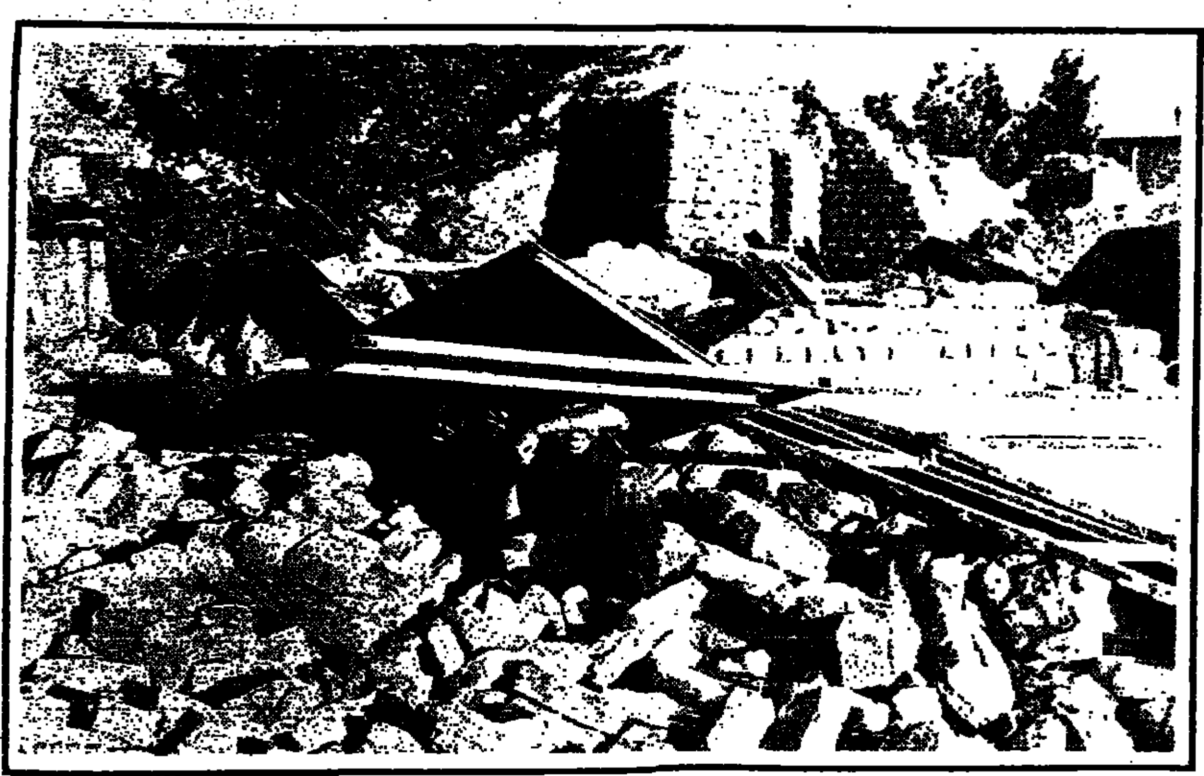














Grandmother Swallows Stolen Gold to Avoid Arrest

HONG KONG — A drug addict grandmother swallowed a gold necklace she had stolen from a jewellery store here in a failed bid to avoid arrest.

The 43 year-old widow snatched the necklace from a store in Mongkok district and fled with a shop assistant in pursuit.

She swallowed the necklace immediately before being apprehended by the staff member, then pleaded with him to let her go as she was trying to raise money to buy milk for her 18-month-old grandaughter. *(AFP)*

Mafioso on Run Sets Cat as Condition for Return

CALTANISETTA, Sicily — A suspected Mafioso sentenced to eight years in jail and on the run for three has offered to turn himself in — as long as his cat can come too.

Claudio Camastra, a lawyer for 36-year-old suspected mob member Mario Milano, told news agency ANSA that police officials from Sicily were already in contact with his client to discuss his return from hiding in Canada.

Camastra said that apart from not wanting to be separated from his Persian cat Minu, Milano also wanted to be able to talk to his family as soon as he returned home. *(Reuter)*

Queen's Speech Sets Out Tony Blair's "One Nation" Ideal



LONDON — Prime Minister Tony Blair put his mark on Britain yesterday with a program of broad legislative reform in the first queen's speech to Parliament written by a Labour leader in 18 years.

Queen Elizabeth II's ritual speech, steeped in the pomp and ceremony of Medieval times, outlined government bills targeting education and crime, health care and gun control, human rights and youth unemployment.

Blair, who wrote the speech read by the queen, said in it, "my government intends to govern for the benefit of the whole nation."

The speech contained 22 specific measures for the ensuing 17-month legislative calendar, plus four optional bills if time allows, and three "white papers," or studies. Those include one on a U.S.-style freedom of information law, and one on a ban on all tobacco advertising.

True to his campaign promise, Blair said in the speech: "The education of young people will be my government's first priority...to raise standards in schools, colleges and universities, and to promote lifelong learning at the workplace."

His program contained two school bills to cut class sizes, tighten teaching standards and phase out preferential subsidies for some private schools. *(AFP)*

Mandela and Mobutu Await Kabila

POINTE NOIRE, Congo — Confusion over the whereabouts of rebel leader Laurent Kabila delayed Zaire's peace talks yesterday, a senior mediator said on the South African ice-breaker that was scheduled to host the meeting.

A rebel spokesman told Reuters by telephone that Kabila, whose forces have been advancing on Zaire's capital Kinshasa, was insisting on joining the ship only after it was in international waters.

South Africa's Nelson Mandela, who is trying to broker a transitional agreement and avert a rebel attack on Kinshasa, and Zaire's embattled President, Mobutu Sese Seko, waited on shore in Congo's main port of Pointe Noire where the craft was docked. *(Reuter)*

British Parliament Blocks Sinn Fein Office Plans

LONDON — Two leading members of Sinn Fein, the political wing of the IRA, were barred yesterday from opening a representative office in Britain's Parliament, to which they were elected on May 1.

House of Commons speaker Betty Boothroyd ruled that Gerry Adams, leader of the hardline Irish Nationalist Party, and chief negotiator Martin McGuinness could only use the facilities of Parliament if they were prepared to be sworn in as members.

Adams and McGuinness, following party policy, have refused to take the oath of loyalty to Queen Elizabeth because that would recognize Britain's right to rule Northern Ireland.

But the two planned to use a loophole under parliamentary rules which allowed them to open an office and hold a parliamentary security pass.

Boothroyd told MPs this loophole would be closed.

"Those who choose not to take their seats should not have access to the many benefits and facilities now available in this house without also taking up their responsibilities as members,"

She gave Adams and McGuinness a week to change their minds and follow the other 656 MPs in swearing an oath on the bible, required under an 1868 act if a member was to take his or her seat. *(Reuter)*

Albanians to Vote June 29

KAVAJE, Albania — Albania, rocked by a popular insurgency, will vote on June 29 for a new Parliament, President Sali Berisha confirmed yesterday.

Berisha officially announced the date in Kavje, 70 kilometers (45 miles) southwest of Tirana, where he inaugurated a memorial to the "victory of democracy" in 1992 in once-communist Albania.

The elections will be "the biggest victory for democracy in Albania," said the president, adding that he was to sign a decree on Wednesday to dissolve Parliament and call elections. *(AFP)*



BEIJING, China (May 13): Policemen block the western entrance to the Forbidden City across from Zhong Shan Park in Beijing after an explosion jolted the park. According to some local residents the blast was caused by a person rigged with explosive with the aim to commit suicide. *(AFP PHOTO)*

Sri Lankan Troops Seize Tamil Rebel Town

COLOMBO — Sri Lankan troops yesterday captured a Tamil separatist stronghold as they pursued a massive offensive aimed at seizing a strategic highway, leaving 19 people dead, military sources said.

Thousands of heavily-armed soldiers took the small town of Omanthai in the island's north after Tamil guerrillas who had been massing in the region for weeks withdrew, military and Tamil sources said.

Omanthai, which lies north of Vavuniya town, had been controlled by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) since 1990. The military said troops found Omanthai deserted.

Tamil residents and officials in Vavuniya, 254 kilometers (158 miles) north of Colombo, said the army was raining long-range mortars and shells on rebel areas from the town. *(AFP)*

Okinawa Still Apart From Rest of Japan, Governor Says

TOKYO — Okinawan Governor Masahide Ota said yesterday the 25 years since the return of the country's southern islands to Japan had not narrowed the "psychological distance" between them and the rest of the country.

Ota made the remarks in the Okinawan capital of Naha on the eve of the 25th anniversary of Okinawa's return to Japan, after 27 years of post-war rule by the U.S. military.

"As you know, we are not in a state to celebrate the anniversary," Jiji Press quoted Ota as telling a news conference, referring to disputes with the central government over the still huge U.S. military presence on the island prefecture.

In particular, the recent legislation that allows U.S. forces to continue occupying Okinawan land even after leases with local land owners expire, showed that the "psychological distance has not been narrowed," he reportedly said.

The sub-tropical islands on the east China Sea, which make up only 0.6 percent of the whole Japanese territory, are home for some 27,000 of 47,000 U.S. troops in Japan, as well as three quarters of U.S. military facilities in the country. *(AFP)*



OKINAWA, Japan (May 13): Anti-U.S. base demonstrators raise their fists to demand the withdrawal of U.S. bases from Okinawa at a main gate of the U.S. Marine Corp's Camp Hansen, in Okinawa, as part of a three-day peace march. Over 500 protesters, one of three groups, staged a peace march ahead of the 25th anniversary this week of the end of post-war U.S. rule on the southern island. Five thousand people, including 1,200 from other parts of Japan, were expected to join the march. *(AFP PHOTO)*

Vietnam Sentences Eight to Death in Drugs Trial

HANOI — A court in the Vietnamese capital sentenced eight people to death yesterday, and imposed a range of jail terms on others at the end of the Communist country's biggest drugs trial, a government official said.

Among those found guilty of involvement in a trafficking ring, which is said to have flooded Vietnam with several hundred kilos of heroin, were 11 police and border guard officials.

Police and border guards were part of the eight sentenced to death.

A Foreign Ministry official told Reuters the sentencing reflected the government's determination to deal strictly with a growing scourge of drugs flowing into and through Vietnam from Asia's narcotics-producing golden triangle region. *(Reuter)*

China Hands Hijack Suspect Over to Taiwan

TAIPEI — Taiwan authorities sailed directly to mainland China yesterday and took custody of an accused hijacker who faces trial on the island, completing a rare cooperative exchange with its communist arch rival.

Taiwan representatives rode a fishing boat from the Taipei-held islet of Quemoy (Jinmen) to nearby Xiamen to fetch Liu Shan-Chung.

Liu — who doused himself with petrol aboard a Taiwan passenger jet on March 10 and threatened to set himself ablaze if it did not fly to China — had sought political asylum there, saying he had been persecuted in nationalist-ruled Taiwan.

Beijing's communist government said no. *(Reuter)*

هكذا من الأصل

Japan's Current Account Surplus Down 24.3% in Year to March

TOKYO — Japan's current account surplus in the year to March 1997 fell for the fourth straight year, the Finance Ministry said, but analysts warned a moderate rebound was expected during the current year.

The surplus, measuring the flow of goods and services as well as investment income and other monetary transfers, dropped 24.3% from the previous year to 7,180.2 billion yen ($60.3 billion), the ministry said.

A ministry official said the plunge was due to brisk imports, including strong rises in value terms of crude oil and office equipment, mainly personal computers, during the year.

The nation's trade surplus in the period shrank 23.6 percent from a year earlier to 8,809.7 billion yen, with exports rising 9.5 percent to 44,830.9 billion yen and imports expanding 22.4 percent to 3,6021.2 billion yen.

Crude oil imports rose 36.5 percent in the year in value terms with office equipment up 28.4 percent. Auto exports rose by 20.4 percent in value terms, ministry officials said.

The capital and financial account showed an outflow of 8,374.3 billion yen in the same year, up from 2,496.6 billion yen a year earlier.

Analysts said the current account surplus was within expectations following a surge in imports towards the end of March to meet growing domestic demand ahead of the April 1 consumption tax rise from three percent to five percent.

"But we forecast Japan's surplus will jump again in the year to March 1998, supported by strong exports following the depreciation of the yen," said Kazutoshi Aratake, an analyst at Nikko Research Institute.

Analysts said the upward-trend of Japan's trade surplus was expected to continue as long as the dollar is hovering around the 120 yen level.

"The yen has gained recently, but this is still within an expected margin," another analyst said. After hitting 127 yen last month, the dollar plunged against the yen to as low as 117.50 yen in Tokyo on Monday.

In March alone, Japan's current account surplus was down 17.0 percent from a year earlier at 1,030.1 billion yen, the ministry said.

The trade surplus in the month shrank 20.4 percent year-on-year to 1,053.9 billion yen, with exports rising 10.0 percent to 4,416.9 billion yen and imports expanding 24.9 percent to 3,363.1 billion yen.

The capital and financial account showed an outflow of 2,319.9 billion yen up from the outflow of 665.2 billion yen a year earlier, the ministry said.

The current account surplus fell year-on-year for the first time in three months, reflecting the continued rise in imports and the larger deficit in services, the ministry said.

"Imports are continuing their uptrend, as the growth of imports continues to exceed that of exports," the official said.

The official said the current account surplus was not likely to rise strongly, with the recent surge seen as a temporary phenomenon. The surplus grew 15.4 percent in February and surged 362.3 percent in January.

"The current account surplus is not looking to rise strongly in the medium term, given the recent movement of exports, imports and services," the official said.

(AFP)

OPEC in Bid to End Quota Violations

ABU DHABI — OPEC President Abdullah al-Badri is touring member states to discuss ways to end quota violations that have created a glut of nearly two million barrels per day and depressed crude prices, the official news agency WAM reported on Tuesday.

Badri, Libya's oil minister, said he discussed the oil market situation with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Oil Minister Obaid ibn Saif al-Nasiri.

"There are consultations among member states to chalk out a formula that will allow OPEC at its next meeting to achieve compliance with production quotas and market stability in order to support prices," he told WAM.

Independent estimates showed the 11-nation Organization of Petrolefim Exporting Countries was producing nearly two million bpd above its official output ceiling of 25.033 million bpd.

Venezuela, Nigeria and Qatar are believed to be the main quota busters.

Such overproduction has combined with the resumption of Iraqi crude exports and a slackening seasonal demand to push down oil prices to below $18 this week compared with nearly $24 at the start of the year.

OPEC's compliance committee met in the Iranian town of Isfahan last week and discussed the market situation ahead of the cartel's June meeting in Vienna.

Badri, who is accompanied by OPEC Secretary General Rilwanu Lukman, said he briefed the new UAE oil minister on the Isfahan talks.



ABU DAHABI, United Arab Emirates (May 12): United Arab Emirates Petroleum Minister Oubeid Al-Nasari (R) greets OPEC President M. Salem Al-Badri of Libya, upon his arrival at Abu Dhabi airport. Al-Badri and OPEC Secretary-General Rilawanu Lukman (not pictured) are on a mission to examine the world oil market. Al-Badri is on a tour of OPEC member states.

(AFP PHOTO)

Nasiri said the UAE was respecting its OPEC-assigned quota of 2.16 million bpd and urged other members to follow suit. He said the UAE, one of the world's top oil producers, wanted a "formula that will bolster prices and achieve stability in the global oil market."

Lukman, a former Nigerian oil minister, said prices had weakened because of the return of sanctions-hit Iraq and there is a "plenty of oil in the market."

But he ruled out a collapse in prices, saying their decline was normal during this time of the year, when demand is at its lowest level.

"Prices are expected to pick up in the last quarter due to an seasonal increase in consumption. But they will not necessarily be as strong as they were last year," Lukman told AFP in Abu Dhabi.

"But it is necessary that all (OPEC) member states respect their quotas to support prices. That is why we are touring OPEC countries... we want to ensure commitment to quotas ahead of the June 25 conference in Vienna."

Lukman said OPEC's compliance committee would meet again in Vienna on the eve of the cartel conference to prepare its report on the oil market.

Badri earlier visited Qatar and is due to fly to Saudi Arabia, the biggest oil producer and exporter in the world.

UAE oil sources said they expected OPEC to roll over its output ceiling for the second half of 1997. But they added it could be a difficult meeting if Venezuela and Nigeria failed to honor a promise they made at the Isfahan meeting to abide by their OPEC-decreed shares.

Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf Arab oil heavyweights have repeatedly voiced concern at overproduction by some OPEC members, which they say are taking advantage of higher output and prices to make more profits.

Abu Dhabi's crown prince Sheikh Khalifa ibn Zayed al-Nahayan, who also met the OPEC chiefs, renewed calls for stopping quota violations.

"The UAE's policy is based on the protection of the interests of oil producers within a balanced formula based on fair prices and market stability without any violations in production quotas," he said.

(AFP)

Asian Shipowners Plan Regional Ship Insurance Facility

SINGAPORE — Asian shipowners are gearing up to launch a regional insurance market to underwrite their expanding fleets, save costs and challenge the dominance of Western insurers, officials said Wednesday.

"The establishment of an Asian-based insurance market is fast becoming a reality," Hong Kong shipping tycoon George Chao said at the opening of a conference of Marine and Insurance Industry Executives.

Chao said regional shipowners were dissatisfied with the "levels of support and consultation" they received from Western-based insurers and wanted to develop a pan-Asian market offering more competitive premium rates.

He said a regionally-focused market on their doorstep would offer Asian shipping lines greater flexibility, cheaper rates and an "atmosphere of local consultation and local understanding."

Shipowners in Asia manage some 17,000 vessels with an estimated capacity of 272 million deadweight tons — 40 percent of the world tonnage. Asia's share is expected to grow to 50 percent of the world merchant fleet by 2000.

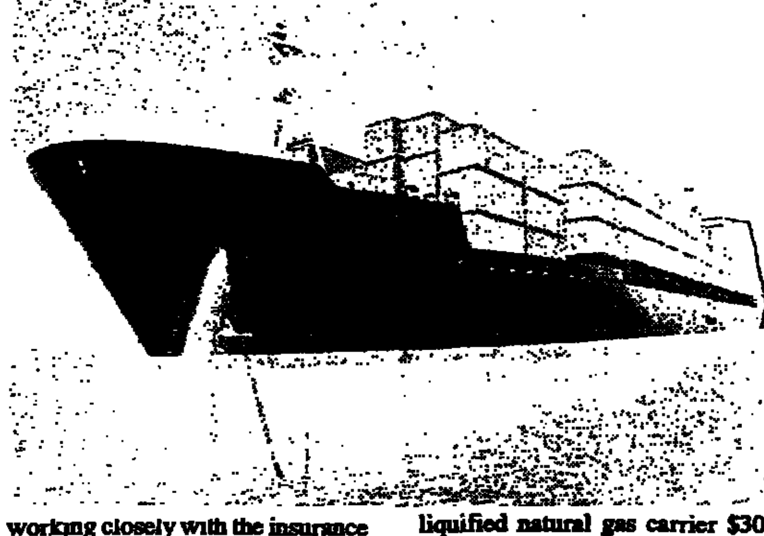
Last year, Asian shipowners paid $1.6 billion in insurance premiums mainly to London-based underwriters who have traditionally dominated the market. Japan accounted for the lion's share.

London, with Lloyd's as its cornerstone, has in recent years been facing intense competition from Scandinavian, French and American marine underwriters.

"In the past when there was no competition Lloyd's was the lord almighty. They dictated the terms," Chao told reporters.

"Competition is good in any industry. We in Asia should not rely on somebody else's facility. We should have something of our own."

He said Asian shipowners were



working closely with the insurance sector to launch a regional market that would compete with Western underwriters.

The move comes at a time when the marine insurance industry appears to be heading for a downward cycle, reversing the trend in the mid-1990s when premium rates had peaked and loss ratios were at a record low, experts said.

A regional insurance facility can be launched within a year, Chao said, but "We are not going in within a year for the simple reason that the insurance market at the moment is very soft."

"An insurance company going in now would lose money and the Asian market would be short-lived," said Chao, who is chairman of the Hong Kong Shipowners Association.

"But we are gearing up and as soon as we see the right time, we move in," Chao added.

Asia has some of the world's busiest ports and most congested sea routes in addition to the perils posed by cyclones and typhoons, and ship losses are common in the region.

Insured sums have hit a peak. The insured sum of a new container vessel can easily exceed $100 million, and that of a liquified natural gas carrier $300 million, experts said.

"Insurance is indispensable to the stable growth of the shipping industry," said Singapore's Insurance Commissioner Lim Shu Chiau.

"However, stability would not be achieved when the insurance market itself is unstable," she said, citing cyclical premium rate fluctuations, changes and disputes over the terms and conditions of insurance coverage and the insecurity of insurers in financial difficulties.

She said the move by the Asian shipowners forum to build a uniquely Asian ship insurance market that would ensure stability in pricing, coverage and security was a "move in the right direction."

Lim said Singapore, a leading maritime center, was an ideal base for a regional underwiting market because of its stable political and business environment, financial infrastructure, strategic location and prudent regulatory practices.

(AFP)

Dollar, Stocks Lower at Midday

TOKYO — The dollar remained lower at midday Wednesday after regaining some ground against the yen on news that trading in a major Japanese trust bank's shares were suspended on the Tokyo Stock Exchange. Stock prices fell.

Players also bought the dollar as Japan's trade figures, released earlier Wednesday, fell within their expectations.

The dollar was traded at 118.86 yen at midday, down 0.38 yen from late Tuesday in Tokyo but above its late New York level overnight of 118.50 yen.

News of the Sumitomo trust and banking suspension prompted further buying of the dollar as players grew cautious about what may have caused it, traders said.

The Tokyo Stock Exchange attributed the suspension to an unconfirmed news report that Sumitomo trust is likely to raise 100 billion yen ($850 million) in equity financing, including a preferred share issue.

Officials of the bank refused to comment.

Japan's unadjusted current account surplus narrowed 17 percent in March from the year-earlier month to 1.030 trillion ($8.73 billion).

On the stock market, shares slipped as brokerage issues faced selling.

Many investors were holding back to see developments in a payoff scandal, in which the government's securities watchdog filed a criminal complaint Tuesday against Nomura Securities Co., as well as three executives.

The Finance Ministry has barred Nomura, Japan's largest securities brokerage, from the bidding and underwriting of Japanese government bonds until the scandal is resolved.

The 225-issue nikkei stock average ended the morning session down 51.10 points, or 0.25 percent, at 20,078.01. On Tuesday, the average shed 14.40 points, or 0.07 percent.

The Tokyo stock price index of all issues listed on the first section was down 4.72 points, or 0.31 percent, to 1,495.95. The topix closed up 7.22 points, or 0.48 percent, the day before.

The Benchmark No. 182 10-year Japanese government bond was sold at 103.52 yen, up from Tuesday's finish of 103.45 yen. Its yield, which moves in the opposite direction, was at 2.490 percent, down from 2.500 percent.

(AP)

British Unemployment Falls by 59,400 to 5.9% in April

LONDON — The number of people out of work in Britain and claiming benefit fell by 59,400 in April from the figure for March, official figures showed on Wednesday.

The unemployment total fell to 1,651,400, the office for national statistics said.

The unemployment rate fell to 5.9% of the workforce. In March, the unemployment rate had fallen to 6.1% of the active population.

The monthly fall in unemployment was sharply above market forecasts. Economists here had expected a fall of 35,000 in the number of people out of work in April.

(AFP)



It was not to rethink his decision concerning the military choice that Hussein asked Ibn Sa'd to grant him the extra time. The path was crystal clear in his mind, but Hussein (AS) eagerly wanted to stay up that night in worship. He desired that it be the last night during which he would talk to his family, companions and loved ones. He knew what lay ahead. Thus he said to his brother al-Abbas, the second time he sent him to Ibn Sa'd:

"Go back to them. If you can delay them until morning and persuade them to keep away from us during the evening, then perhaps we many be able to pray to our Lord during the night, to supplicate Him and seek His forgiveness. He knows that I have always loved prayer, the recitation of his Book, invocating Him at length and seeking His forgiveness."

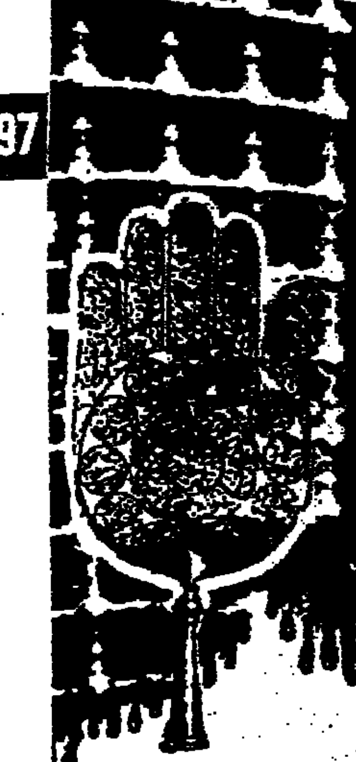
The situation was extremely dismal. The Umayyad army was surrounding the camp of Hussein (AS), while women and children were frightened as to what would happen next. Imam Hussein was checking his defences and worrying about how to keep the women and children out of harm's way.

Shortly before sunset, Imam Hussein (AS) addressed his companions and family and told them that the enemy wanted no one except him. Thus, anyone of them was free to withdraw during the night, in order to escape death. Not one of them would leave him. They unanimously declared their readiness to fight and lay their lives down for the sake of Islam.

Darkness fell. The household of the Prophet (S) and their supporters did not close their eyes. Some of them were praying, invocating Allah for His mercy, reciting the Qoran. Others were preparing wills and saying last words to their families. Voices were like the buzz of the bees. They were preparing themselves to meet their Lord. Swords and spears were being readied. That night they were guests on the land of Karbala'. History awaited the event that would take place on the morn. The swords and spears were pens that would inscribe the most glorious chapter in the continuing drama being written by man.

During that night Hussein bid farewell to his family and loved ones. He paid visits to al-Sajjad,

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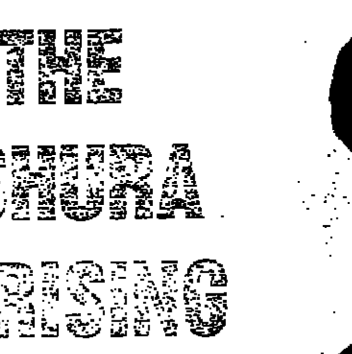




أنا قتيل العبرة و لايذكرني مؤمن إلا استعبرة

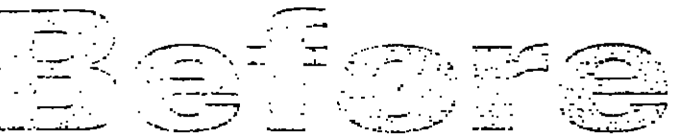
"I am the one who will be killed in a manner that tears will be shed upon me and my rememberance will not but awaken the conscience and impart lessons."

Imam Hussein (AS)





Imam Hussein (AS) set off the great Ashura Uprising and, by sacrificing his own blood and that of his dear ones, rescued Islam and justice; condemned the machinery of the Bani Omayyads and devastated its pillars.



Before Karbala

Part 2

Although he refused at first, so urgent were the demands made by all parties that he finally accepted — so long as everyone paid him homage, and so long as they understood that he would decide strictly according to the Qoran and the Sunna of the Holy Prophet (S). The people, desperate, accepted these conditions.

However, there were a few who were not happy; a few who had hoped to get the caliphate and thereby get control of the empire. Among these were Talha and Zubair, who initially paid homage to Hazrat Ali (AS) but then slipped away to Mecca, starting a rebellion; they were defeated and killed in the battle of al-Jamal. Another person who was not happy was Muawiyah ibn Abu Sufiyan, who had been appointed governor of Syria some ten years before; but rather than rebelling openly, he called for revenge on the murderers of the third caliph, blaming Hazrat Ali (AS). After trying various peaceful means of resolving the situation, Hazrat Ali (AS) was forced to resort to violence and, in 36 AH (657 AD), the battle of Siffin was fought.

Unfortunate Moments

Hazrat Ali's army, led by Malik-e-Ashtar, was on the verge of victory when Muawiyah used a trick to prevent his army from being defeated; he asked his soldiers to raise copies of the Qoran on their lances, and asked for arbitration. Despite Hazrat Ali's warnings that this was a trick, many soldiers in the Islamic army, incited by a few bribed by Muawiyah, refused to fight on. The resulting arbitration was inconclusive, and only gave Muawiyah a chance to escape. Angered by this, many of those who had originally proposed the arbitration now rebelled against Hazrat Ali (AS); called Kharijites, they were put down at the battle of Nahrawan. But one of them, Abd ar-Rahman bin al-Muljam, attacked Hazrat Ali (AS) with a poisoned sword in the mosque of Kufa on 19 Ramadhan, 40 AH (23 January 661 AD); Hazrat Ali was martyred two days later.

Now the Kufans accepted Imam Hassan (AS) as their new caliph, but all except a minority refused to fight against Muawiyah. A war at this stage would have meant more bloodshed. Also, the issue was not clear-cut; Muawiyah claimed to be fighting to get revenge for the third caliph, though in fact he only wanted power. And even if Imam Hassan (AS) had won, that would only have meant a worldly victory for the caliphate; for not all provinces of the Islamic world had pledged allegiance to Imam Hassan (AS), and it would have been easy for later historians to misconstrue his fight as being one for the caliphate. Thus, Imam Hassan (AS) agreed to compromise and let Muawiyah get the caliphate, on the following conditions: firstly, Muawiyah should rule according to the Qoran and Sunna; secondly, Muawiyah should nominate no-one as caliph after him, but leave the choice to the Muslim ummah; thirdly, that people should be left in peace; fourthly, that no harm should come to the followers of Hazrat Ali (AS) — including their families and belongings; and lastly, that no harm should come to Imam Hassan (AS), Imam Hussein (AS), or anyone of the Ahl-ul-Bait. Muawiyah readily accepted, suddenly forgetting his zeal for revenge; in the years to come, he was to violate each one of the conditions.

Land without Sincerity

All this Imam Hussein (AS) knew very well; he also knew that because most Kufans were motivated by economic reasons, they would be unwilling to risk their lives for him, and in times of danger would desert him as they had deserted his father and brother. But the fight against what Yazid represented had to be made, unlike Muawiyah, who at least had made a show of being a good Muslim, Yazid had openly repudiated Islam. What was needed, Imam Hussein (AS) realized, was a revolution in the consciousness of the Muslim ummah, which had been corrupted by lust for the wealth of an Arab empire; and this revolution would not be achieved not by his accession to the caliphate, but by his death — in such a way that the issues would be clear-cut. Yazid would not have a chance of denying complicity in the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS), as Muawiyah had for the martyrdom of Imam Hassan (AS). Accordingly, the Imam took the first step and sent his cousin, Hazrat Muslim ibn Aqeel, as his emissary to Kufa.

Safeer-e-Hussein

Arriving in Kufa, Hazrat Muslim at first received a lot of support; it is said that as many as 18,000 and at least 12,000 Kufans pledged homage to the cause of Imam Hussein (AS). But as soon as Yazid heard of this, he ordered Obaidullah ibn Ziad, the governor of Basra, to go and take charge of the situation. Arriving in disguise, with a turban covering his face, ibn Ziad was mistaken at first for Imam Hussein (AS) by the Kufans; as they gathered around him, ready to pay homage.

(To be Contd.)

IMAM HUSSEIN IBN ALI (AS)

Part 7

It is reported in the Musnad (Book of traditions) of Ahmad bin Hanbal, the two Sahihs (Authentic books of traditions), and the exegesis of al-Tha'alibi and al-Tabarsi, that Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, was quoted as saying, "when the verse (say: I do not ask you for any payment for my preaching to you except the love for my relatives) was revealed, Muslims asked the Prophet (S), 'O Messenger of Allah (S)! Who are your kinsfolk whom we should love?! 'Ali, Fatimah and their two sons,' answered the Prophet (AS)."

Next to the verses of the Glorious Qoran, we quote certain statements, from the Messenger of Allah (S) as additional evidence expressing the lofty position occupied by Imam Hussein (AS) in the world of Islam and the Muslim Ummah.

1. In the Sahih of al-Tirmidhi, Ya'la bin Murrah is quoted to have said, "The Messenger of Allah (S) said, 'Hussein is from me and I am from Hussein. Allah loves whoever loves Hussein. Hussein is a disciple of the disciples."

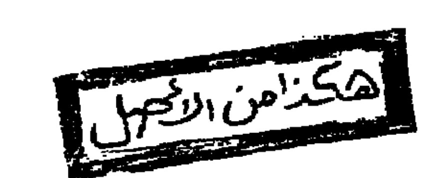
2. Salman al-Farsi is reported to have said, "I heard the Prophet of Allah (S) saying, 'Hassan and Hussein are my two sons. Whoever loves them then he loves me. And whoever dislikes them then he dislikes me. And whoever dislikes me then Allah dislikes him. And whomever Allah dislikes, He will throw him into hell face downward.'"

3. Al-Bara' bin Azib is quoted to have said, "I saw the Messenger of Allah (S) carrying Hussein bin Ali (AS) on his shoulder. He was saying, 'O Lord! I do love him so love him.'"

4. Abdullah bin Mas'ood is reported to have said, "The Messenger of Allah (S) said, concerning Hassan and Hussein, 'These are my two sons, whoever loves them then he loves me. And whoever dislikes them he dislikes me.'"

5. Ali bin Hussein (AS) said, on the authority of his father, on the authority of his grandfather (AS), "The Messenger of Allah (S) took the arms of Hassan and Hussein and said, 'Whoever loves me and loves these two and their father, he will certainly be with me on the Day of Judgement.'"

(To be Contd.)



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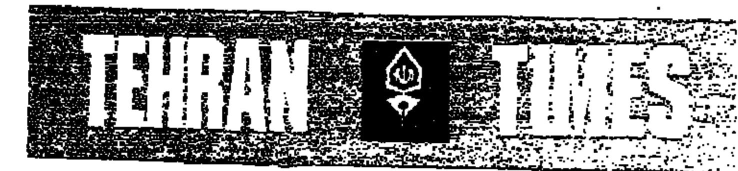


who will be killed;
tears will be shed
remembrance
the conscience
lessons."



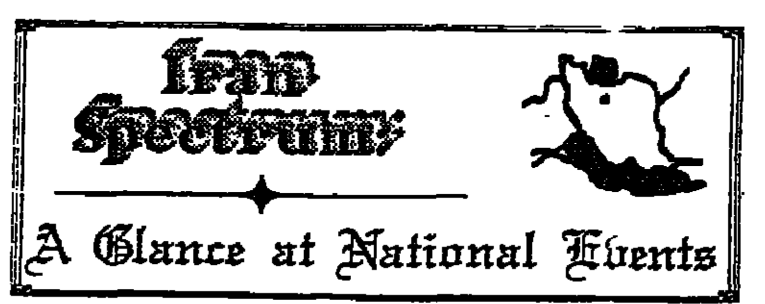
IN IBN ALI (AS)





Tehran Times Weekend Issue

THU. MAY 15, 1997; ORDIBEHESHT 25, 1376; MOHARRAM 8, 1418



The World This Week

WORLD IN HIGHLIGHT

Tuesday, May 6

Clinton Visit to Mexico Triggers Demonstrations



U.S. President Bill Clinton opened his first trip to Latin America by trying to soften tension with Mexico over immigration restrictions and illegal drugs, declaring himself "a good friend to the people of Mexico."

Anti-Taleban Forces Launch Offensive Near Salang

Taleban soldiers launched a massive pre-dawn offensive outside this deserted town at the mouth of the strategic Salang Highway that links Kabul to northern Afghanistan.

Wednesday, May 7

Kashmir Hostages Killed by Separatist Group

Four Westerners seized by separatists in troubled Kashmir 21 months ago have been killed by their captors, a top military chief told Indian interrogators, officials said.

Mobutu Flies Out of Kinshasa, Perhaps for Final Time

With rebel forces closing in on Kinshasa, President Mobutu Sese Seko left his threatened capital aboard his private Boeing 727 and flew to Gabon. It was unclear whether he would ever come back.

Thursday, May 8

Bruton Heartened After N. Ireland Talks With Blair

Irish Prime Minister John Bruton said after talks with Tony Blair that he believed the new British prime minister would make the search for peace in Northern Ireland one of his top priorities.

Friday, May 9

Storm in South China's Guangzhou Kills at Least 40

A rainstorm that battered southern China killed at least 40 people after triggering devastating floods that one local official described as occuring only once in five centuries.

Plane Crash Kills 35 in China

At least 35 people died in China's first big aviation disaster for almost three years when a Boeing 737 slammed into the runway of a storm-swept airport in the southern city of Shenzhen, officials said.

Ross Meets Israeli Minister as Hopes Dim for Breakthrough



Israel and the Palestinians saw little hope for a breakthrough as U.S. envoy Dennis Ross met with top Israeli officials in a bid to find a formula to revive peace negotiations.

Saturday, May 10

Mobutu Lands in Kinshasa

Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko returned to the capital Kinshasa afternoon from Gabon where he had been attending a summit of central African leaders.

Pope Gets Warm Welcome in Lebanon

Pope John Paul arrived in Lebanon to a warm welcome from authorities of the Muslim-majority country and immediately issued a veiled call for the departure of Israeli troops.

43 Dead, 100,000 Homeless as Floods Submerge Chinese Province

At least 43 people have been killed and 100,000 left homeless by ferocious rainstorms wreaking havoc in southern China, reports said.

Sunday, May 11

Japan PM Leaves Peru After Hostage Thank-You Trip



Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto headed home after a one-day trip to Peru to thank president Alberto Fujimori for an "admirable" hostage rescue that ended a rebel siege at his ambassador's home.

Pope Crowns Lebanon Visit With Call for Peace

Pope John Paul crowned a triumphant visit to Beirut with a call from its war-ravaged heart for restoration of Lebanese sovereignty and a just peace throughout the Middle East.

Turks Protest at Plan to Close Religious Schools

Thousands of people gathered in the shadow of Istanbul's historic Blue Mosque to protest at a clampdown on Islamic schools ordered by Turkey's powerful secularist military.

Monday, May 12

Pak, Indian PMs Agree to Set Up Hotline

Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his Indian counterpart Inder Kumar Gujral agreed during talks to establish a hotline between them.

Russia, Chechnya Sign "Historic" Peace Deal

President Boris Yeltsin and Chechen leader Aslan Maskhadov signed a peace accord promising an end to 400 years of intermittent conflict between Moscow and the independence-seeking north Caucasus region.

Opposition Says Election Boycott Respected

Mali's mainstream opposition parties said their boycott of Sunday presidential elections had been respected after a low turnout in the impoverished west African country.

IRAN IN HIGHLIGHT

Tuesday, May 6

Mubarak, Velayati Hold "Frank and Constructive" Talks

The visiting Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati met Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak at the presidential palace in Cairo, the state-run Egyptian radio reported.

President Inaugurates Mobarakeh Steel Company Extension Plan

The first phase of an expansion plan at the Mobarakeh Still Company was inaugurated by President Hashemi Rafsanjani in Isfahan.

Wednesday, May 7

10th International Book Fair, 4th Press Festival Wind Up



10th Tehran International Book Fair and the 4th Press Festival wound up in presence of Majlis Speaker Hojjatoleslam Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri.

Velayati Confers With Lebanese, Syrian Officials

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati arrived in Damascus where he was welcomed by his Syrian counterpart Faruq al-Shara.

Iran Will Not Submit to Bullying Powers

The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, said that under no circumstances Iranian nation will surrender to interventionist policies of arrogant powers.

Thursday, May 8

Guardian Council Approves 4 Out of 238 Candidates

The Guardian Council of Constitution approved four presidential candidates out of 238 declaring them eligible to run for presidential elections slated for May 23.

Mid-East Oil and Gas Towards 3rd Millennium Opens

The world's energy security is intertwined with that of the Persian Gulf which is the main source of oil supply for the world's increasing demand in the future, President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani said.

Friday, May 9

Rafsanjani, Rakhmanov Hold First Round of Talks

The first round of bilateral talks between President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and Tajik President Emomali Rakhmanov began.

Saturday, May 10

Over 1,000 Killed, 40,000 Injured in Quake



Over 1,000 people have so far been killed and fourty thousands injured at Darmian district, Khorasan Province, official in charge of the provincial natural disasters headquarters Mehdi Siadati said.

Iran Sees Regional Stability With Russian Help

Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani said Iran was ready to cooperate with Russia to restore stability in Tajikistan and end a civil war in neighboring Afghanistan.

Candidates Launch Presidential Campaign



The four presidential candidates, whose eligibility had been approved by the Guardians Council, officially launched their election campaigns throughout the country since the early hours of Saturday morning.

Sunday, May 11

President Rafsanjani Arrives in Ashkabad

President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani heading a high-ranking delegation, arrived in Turkmenistan and was warmly welcomed by his Turkmen counterpart Saparmurat Niyazov.

Maneuvers Launched in Persian Gulf Waters



The Joint 'Salman Fateh Maneuvers code-named 'Ya Hussein Shahid' were launched in the Persian Gulf and Sea of Oman by the air and naval forces.

Monday, May 12

President Visits Quake-Hit Areas

President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani toured villages in the east of the country devastated by a powerful earthquake which left around 2,400 people dead.

Rafsanjani, Niyazov Hold First Round of Talks

President of Iran and Turkmenistan held their first round of talks. President Saparmurat Niyazov of Turkmenistan welcoming the Iranian president as the first distinguished guest in the newly-built presidential palace, stressed that Turkmens consider Iranians as their dear and true friends.

[illegible] Results

[illegible]

When Jan Schwoyer of Allentown, Pa., learned that her 15-year-old son had been given an in-school suspension, she was upset. After she finally got him to tell his side of the story, she was livid. "The kid sitting behind me hit the girl in front of me," her son explained, "and the girl turned and yelled at me." When Schwoyer asked her son why he hadn't told this to the assistant principal who handed out the suspension, she came up against adolescent ethics.

"I won't rat," said the boy.

Determined to right the wrong, Schwoyer phoned the assistant principal, calmly told him what her son had said, and asked if he had any proof that her boy had hit the girl. The assistant principal immediately began screaming as if Schwoyer were a kid who'd cut class.

Shocked, Schwoyer simply asked, "Why are you so angry at me?" That stopped the tirade cold. The assistant principal calmed down, and they resolved the problem.

Ask yourself whether you're upset about this particular issue or really angry about something else. If it's the latter, you won't get the results you're looking for, and you'll end up even more frustrated and angry.

Jan Schwoyer discovered that in a difficult situation, it's possible to get results without becoming pushy or loud. Indeed, effective complaining is a skill anyone can master. All you need is determination and an understanding of these simple rules:

In a difficult situation, it's possible to get results without becoming pushy or loud. Indeed, effective complaining is a skill anyone can master.

Be Prepared. You have a better chance of winning a case if you're an expert on your situation. That doesn't mean you must cite Supreme Court decisions, but you do need to be prepared with *names, dates, prices or times that* relate to your complaint.

When an airline failed to award Lillian Sims of Milwaukee all the frequent-flier miles she'd earned on an extended foreign trip because of an obscure provision, she tracked down the supervisor of the frequent-flier program. "She asked me to send her all the information," Sims recalls. "I had everything she needed, and after reviewing it, she awarded me the right number of miles."

Face the Issue. Letters can be ignored, and your opponent can be unreasonable over the telephone. Your personal presence, however, can sometimes make all the difference.

Deirdre Martin of Ithaca, N.Y., was having trouble getting her insurance company to pay for a doctor's visit that the insurer maintained was for a pre-existing condition. After wending her way through the company's bureaucracy, she realized a mistake had been made about the date of the visit. To collect her claim, she just needed a note from her doctor.

"But when I called his office, they said they were too busy, and told me to have the insurance company call them," she explains. "I knew the insurer's representative would never call, so I decided to drive to the doctor's office and ask in person."

Martin introduced herself to the receptionist who had originally fielded her call; then she politely repeated her request. "It was as if I were seven-foot-one instead of five-foot-one. The receptionist actually typed the letter while I waited."

Stay Cool. Being nasty will mark you as a crank, not a reasonable person who's been wronged. A demonstration of anger only triggers the fight-or-flight response in other people, and neither response will help you. As Jan Schwoyer learned when talking with the assistant principal, "It's the person who gets emotional first who loses."

The best gambit is to say you have a problem and need help to solve it. This gentle approach is likely to disarm your opponent; when someone humbly asks for help, most people do what they can.

In dealing with an auto mechanic or a plumber, for example, try a friendly, respectful approach when a repair doesn't work. "Don't accuse him of not doing the job right," advises John E. Novak, a general contractor from Edgartown, Mass "Instead, say that you still have the problem and need his help again."

In situations where you think you've been overcharged, says lawyer Rick Felberbaum of Boca Raton, Fla., ask for a detailed breakdown of the bill. "Start by saying you're perplexed, since the bill doesn't match what you were told the job should cost. By asking for clarification, you give the person an opportunity to save face if there's been an overcharge."

Of course if honey alone doesn't work, adding a bit of vinegar might. But rather than insulting, point out what will happen if you don't get results. For instance saying you've been a regular customer for years carries the implied threat that you might not be one in the future.

Being tactful is just as important when dealing with rude strangers — often the most vexing situations of all because people are reluctant to have public *confrontations. For example,* "If someone cuts ahead of you in line, calmly say, 'I believe these people were next, then us,'" suggests Marilyn Puder-York, a clinical psychologist in New York City. Being nice but speaking up will usually shame the offender into submission.

Work Your Way Up. Whenever you have a problem, resist the temptation to start at the top. If you call the company president right away, you'll probably be routed to the vice president in charge of nut cases. If you work your way up to the president, though, you'll be seen as dogged and respectful. And you're likely to get what you want.

People can't do what's beyond their control, however. If a clerk is obstinate and unresponsive, thank her for her time, say you know she's done all she could (even if she hasn't) and ask to speak to "your supervisor in customer service." Persist until you get to someone who has the power to change decisions.

Similarly, if your child is having trouble in school and his teacher is hostile, resist the impulse to speak immediately with an administrator. By going over the teacher's head, you put the administrator in the position of having to defend a faculty member.

Instead, speak with the teacher in private. Don't present yourself as an adversary but as a concerned parent who wants to share information and help solve the problem. If this courteous approach doesn't work, then you're within your rights to call a department head, the principal or, if necessary, the district superintendent.

Pick Worthwhile Fights. Some people spend endless hours — and dollars — complaining about the most minor matters. For them it's the principle that counts. But most of us need to be selective about our spats. A financial complaint is worth making only if the possible gain outweighs the time and money spent. In other disputes there should be some clear-cut potential benefit.

"Ask yourself whether you're upset about this particular issue or really angry about something else," advises Amy Miller, a clinical psychologist in New York. "If it's the latter, you won't get the results you're looking for, and you'll end up even more frustrated and angry."

If it's just a matter of venting, take a tip from Jody Rein of Denver, who has a drawerful of complaint letters never sent. "Just putting my anger down on paper is usually enough," she says, "especially in situations where I probably don't stand a chance."

Remember, the secret to dealing with the inevitable nuisances of life is to first pick your fights, and then use these strategies to frame your complaints in a way that avoids antagonism — and gets results.

(Courtesy the Good Housekeeping)

A demonstration of anger only triggers the fight-or-flight response in other people, and neither response will help you.

Entertaining in Style



Strawberry Cream Gateau

You will need...	4 oz. self-raising flour
	pinch salt
	4 oz. butter or margarine
Preparation time	4 oz. castor sugar
30 minutes	2 eggs, lightly beaten
	For the filling and decoration:
Cooking time	8 oz. strawberries
30 minutes	½ pint double cream
Oven setting	
350°F, gas mark 4	

Sieve flour and salt together. Cream fat and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs, one at a time. Fold in dry ingredients with a metal spoon. Divide mixture equally between 2 well greased 6-7 inch sandwich tins. Bake in the center of a moderate oven for 25-30 minutes. Turn out and cool on wire tray.

Hull the strawberries, reserve half for decorating the top and roughly chop the rest. Whip the cream until leaves a trail from the whisk.

Put the cakes together filling the center with half of the cream and all of the chopped strawberries. Place the whole strawberries on top of the cake and, using a large star tube, swirl cream around the strawberries. As an alternative, when strawberries are not in season, use a tin of peaches, well drained.

QUICK TIP

To make cream go further: use equal quantities of single and double cream and whisk in a little castor sugar.

Alternatively whip a small carton of double cream until thick and fold in two egg whites which have been stiffly beaten with a little castor sugar.

Stunning Ideas for Flower Arrangement

HIGH SOCIETY



This stunning display of rich pinks and purples beautifully complements the handsome lilac-glazed vase. Using a tall vase, such as this, warrants a lofty arrangement. Begin by putting some chunks of soaked florists' foam into the vase and creating the outl[illegible] with long stems of eucalyptus. Strengthen the outline with four or five deep pink gladioli.



Cut dark purple spray chrysanthemums to varying lengths and form a 'central column' through the middle of the display, leaving one small flower head to hang gently down over the rim of the vase. Foll[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] w[illegible]h four deep pink [illegible]. Finally, use delicate sprays of *Dendrobium* orchids to strengthen the outline, reserving one or two to gently curve downwards.

هكذا من الأصل

Feature

Facets of Countries

Spotlight: ***Islamic Republic of Iran***

Traditional Teahouses

The traditional Iranian teahouse came into existence during the Safavid Dynasty (1500-1736) when the Sherly Brothers set up the first teahouse in the country. Later, the head of the four Qezelbash tribes set up four teahouses in the ancient Iranian city of Isfahan, where they met with members of their respective tribes.

The 1979 Islamic Revolution has not only introduced fundamental changes in the political, economic and social life of Iranian society but, along with its emphasis on the rich Iranian Islamic culture, has brought dramatic changes in the lifestyle of the people.

The change in the people's outlook has served to encourage a return to clean cultural values.

Less than a century ago the traditional teahouses were meeting places where people of each neighborhood spent the evening hours of the cold and long winter nights chatting and listening to story tellers, narrators and singers who recited poems of the famous 10th century Iranian poet Ferdowsi, author of the great epic poem "Shahnameh, Book of Kings." The people, tired of their day's work, went to the teahouses in the evenings where they relaxed, chatted with one another, discussed their problems and exchanged views. In fact the teahouses were places where new ideas flourished, old ideas polished and made new with updates in newly discovered knowledge, science and technology. In other words, they were the centers of education and promotion of genuine Iranian culture.

However, in the age of radio, television and satellite, the teahouses started gradually to lose their appeal and more and more people became confined to their homes and apartments in the cities. However, now it is time to revive the teahouses and bring them back to life.

Origin

Not too long ago the caravanserais were the earlier version of the teahouses. The caravanserais were usually built within the vicinity of towns and also on intercity raods to accommodate travelers who traveled on horses. They stopped by these caravanserais to spend a night or two to take rest, eat and feed their horses. They were mainly served simple food and tea and the keepers of caravanserais were known to be the most trustworthy with whom the travelers could leave their money and merchandise.

Due to the nature of their occupation, the caravanserais keepers were the most well informed of domestic events and the first to find out about the latest news and developments from travelers coming from other towns. They were thus counted upon to warn people of disastrous events or impending problems and disasters such as famine.

During the reign of Shah Abbas of the Safavid Dynasty (1585-1629), the Sherly brothers traveled to Iran to train the army and manufacture cannons. To pass their free hours, they opened a shop where they offered coffee. Soon others followed suit and opened similar places where tea was served and which later came to be known as the "teahouse."

As teahouses sprouted in every corner of the town, the caravanserais lost their reason for existence and disappeared little by little.



For many years Iranian traditional teahouses were neglected and cozy teahouses which were once the gathering and socialization places of Iranian society disappeared. Now it is time to revive this old aspect of Iranian national culture.

In terms of their structure and architecture, teahouses are similar to caravanserais. Their architecture is taken from the architecture of dressing rooms of Iranian traditional bathhouses. The entrance has pillars and the structure is dome-covered. The interior has stone or brick platforms and benches, small tile-covered ponds with fountains, trellised windows with colorful glasses, built-in shelves in the upper part of the room where handicraft and antique articles are displayed to make the atmosphere more homelike, cozy and pleasant.

What Went On Inside Teahouses?

As the sun started setting, the teaman started his samovar and brewed tea. By then the tea cups and saucers had been washed, the teahouse yard swept clean, the flowerbeds in the garden washed, the pond filled and oil lamps lit—giving an inviting atmosphere for people to enter.

Old and young, tired of the day's work, stopped by on their way home to refresh themselves with a cup of freshly brewed tea and to chat with one another about the day's happenings. Experiences were shared, problems aired, and political issues discussed. The teaman went about serving tea and water pipes while answering queries on the latest events in the neighborhood. Usually, the customers who were acquainted with each other sat around the same table. People came to find new friends or meet old ones. Newcomers were introduced to old customers by the teaman. The newcomer soon felt at home and made friends while chatting over a cup of tea. The teaman and workers used to sleep in the teahouse.

At the early stage, no entertainment was offered to customers. However, as the teahouses became popular and crowded, especially during the rule of the Safavids (1500-1736) and Qajars (1779-1925), entertainment became a popular feature of the teahouses which went on till late at night. The narrators entertained the customers by telling epic stories and the braveries of the holy Imams. Soon the teahouse became the exhibition hall of paintings at a time when art galleries were non-existent. These paintings came to be known as "Teahouse Paintings."

According to Professor Abbas Blouki, till the end of the Qajar Dynasty, painting, poetry reading sessions, music, singing and traditional shows only belonged to the royal court and the public were deprived of such leisure. However, a famous painter, Ali Reza Qoullaraghasi, took the art to the general public by displaying for the first time his famous work of art, "Day of Ashura," in a teahouse in the ancient city of Rey, south of Tehran. The public enthusiasm motivated him to do other paintings from the epic stories of Shahnameh, and gradually a calligraphy of poems of great Iranian poets such as Hafez, Sa'adi and Mowlana decorated walls of teahouses.

Professor Blouki writes that although teahouses served as the first gallery of teahouse paintings, the original artist was Marco Gerigorian, a young painter who followed the modern school of painting. Almost a century ago he collected these paintings and called them the "Teahouse Paintings" because of the fact that they were displayed in teahouses. These paintings date back to about a century ago.

In general, Teahouse Paintings depict a clear and simple subject. The artist paints a historical event as well as heroes and figures from Ferdowsi's Shahnameh. In order to produce a good work of art he must master the subject matter and the historical event. If the painting is one relating to the holy Imams, he must be well aware of the relating *Hadith*. The artist uses his imagination in producing a marvelous painting whose simplicity makes it appealing and comprehensible to ordinary people. The beauty of Teahouse Paintings lies in its masterful simplicity.

The teahouses were also favored and loved for their story tellers and narrators. The experienced story teller used to attract and excite the customers while enthusiastically telling an epic story from Ferdowsi's Shahnameh, such as the battle of Rustam, the most renowned hero among the Iranians, with Isfandyar, the son of Gushtasp, (of the first dynasty of Persian kings. The story teller, who usually had an assistant, told the story in a manner that the listener imagined himself in the battleground. Occasionally he cited couplets from Shahnameh (this was how Ferdowsi's poems became popular among the illiterate who could simply memorize the poem by listening to the story teller.) The story teller chose the subject depending on the occasion and the specific event of the month or week. For instance, during the mourning month of Muharram, he concentrated on the life and heroism of Imam Hussein (AS) and his associates. In the Islamic fasting month of Ramazan, when the customers dropped by after breaking their fast, he told stories relating to Imam Ali (AS), who was martyred on the 21st day of Ramazan.

The experienced story teller, [illegible] depicting a passage from the Shah[illegible] stories from the great epic [illegible]

In general, the story tellers were powerful speakers who could easily stimulate emotions and the nationalist and Islamic sentiments of the listeners. At times they told the people how to live with dignity, defend their rights and liberties. Many disputes were settled in the teahouse in an impressively friendly manner and many cases that could not be settled in the state courts were settled in the teahouse. All in all, during the time when there was no sign of the high tech telecommunication facilities and radio and television, the teahouses were the most pleasant places for passing time.

Restoration of Teahouses

Efforts are underway to bring back to life the one time favorite hangout of the Iranian people—the teahouses. This is part of the overall drive to return to traditional culture and to regain lost identity. Revival of traditional culture, manifested in various aspects of social life, is a way of attracting the interest of the youth in genuine Iranian culture. Teahouses provide a bridge between the present and the past and provides a pleasant start in their search for national and Islamic identity. As part of the public campaign, recently some 50 teahouses have been restored and reopened in the capital city alone. One which has been reopened with purely traditonal and old-fashioned style is the Azari Teahouse.

The Azari Teahouse is in fact a museum of Iranian antiques and marvelous handicrafts. The brick flooring, the wooden latticed doors and windows with colorful glasses, the tile work, blue tile ponds with fountains and the paintings, take one back to the atmosphere of the past when man was not alienated from himself and society and was not a captive of modern industrial life. The teahouse has been so masterfully restored such that it is just as it was when it existed a long time ago. Other than its interior decoration and setup, it features story tellers and narrators. All in all it is the exact replica of the old teahouse.

With the first visit to the Azari Teahouse one immediately falls in love with it. The customers, the youth in particular, enjoy the traditional culture along with their cup of tea. Some may not be aware of the purposes the teahouse used to serve in the past and have come to explore it. For the aged who are nostalgic about the teahouse, their revival brings back sweet memories of the past when life was not as hectic, not as confined to the walls of apartments and not as devoid of simple and genuine pleasure. As usual, most find the stories told at the Azari Teahouse fascinating and stimulating.



A "Teahouse Painting" graces the wall of a teahouse.

Among other old and popular teahouses are the Tayeb Teahouse, Abbasi Teahouse and Qasem Gousfandi Teahouse. (Courtesy of *IranAir* in flight magazine, No. 11, 1994)

Answers to last week's WHO'S WHO:

1(F), 2(G), 3(H), 4(I), 5(J), 6(K), 7(L), 8(A), 9(B), 10(C), 11(D), 12(E).

TODAY IN HISTORY

1796 — Forces under France's Napoleon Bonaparte enter Milan, Italy.

1848 — Communist uprising in Paris. Second uprising in Vienna against new Austrian constitution which is repealed.

1924 — U.S. Congress passes bill instituting immigrant quotas based on nationality.

1940 — The Netherlands surrenders to Germany in World War II.

1948 — New state of Israel is attacked by Egyptian planes and invaded in the north and east by troops from Lebanon and Trans-Jordan.

1957 — Britain explodes its first thermonuclear bomb in central Pacific.

1962 — President John F. Kennedy orders 4,000 more U.S. troops to be stationed in Thailand to counter threat in Laos.

1971 — Egyptians demonstrate in Cairo after President Anwar Sadat purges opponents from cabinet and emerges as new strongman.

1988 — Ethiopian government declares state of emergency in war-torn northern provinces of Eritrea and Tiger.

1989 — Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, in Beijing, declares end to Sino-Soviet split.

1990 — Thousands of Soviet Soldiers try to break into Latvia's parliament in anti-independence demonstration.

1991 — French Prime Minister Michel Rocard resigns and Mitterand replaces him with socialist Edith Cremon.

1992 — Thousands of opposition supporters seize Azerbaijan's Parliament building and Presidential Palace.

1993 — French police kill gunman holding nursery students hostage in Paris.

CANDID CAMERA




Photo: Abbas Kowsari

TOMORROW IN HISTORY

1905 — Henry Fonda, U.S. stage and screen actor, born. Best known for his roles in the films *"The Grapes of Wrath"* and *"Twelve Angry Men"*. He won an Oscar for his last film *"On Golden Pond"*.

1919 — Liberace, U.S. concert pianist and entertainer, born as Wladiziu Valentino Liberace. His trade mark was a Candelabra on his piano.

1929 — In Hollywood the first "academy awards", presented by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, went to actress Janet Gaynor and actor Emil Jannings. The best film was *"Wings"*. The awards were named Oscars in 1931.

1943 — In World War II, British Lancaster aircraft bombed the Mohne and the Eder Dams in Germany's industrial Ruhr basin using a bouncing bomb.

1963 — U.S. Astronaut Gordon Cooper in his Mercury-Atlas craft splashed down near midway in the Pacific after orbiting the Earth 22 times in a mission lasting just over 34 hours - the longest American space mission so far.

1967 — French President Charles de Gaulle spoke of 'formidable obstacles' in Britain's application to join the EEC, a virtual veto.

1969 — The Russian spacecraft Venus 5 landed on the planet Venus.

1974 — Helmut Schmidt was sworn in as new chancellor of West Germany, after the resignation of Willy Brandt.

1975 — Japanese mountaineer Junko Tabei became the first woman to climb Everest.

1989 — A car bomb in Beirut killed the religious leader of Lebanon's Sunni Muslims, Sheikh Hassan Khaled, and at least 21 others. The grand mufti of the republic was 68.

1989 — Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping, met in Beijing in the first Sino-Soviet summit in 30 years, formally ending the feud between the two countries.

1991 — Queen Elizabeth II, on a tour of the United States, became the first monarch to address congress.

1993 — Suleyman Demirel was sworn in as Turkey's ninth president, succeeding Turgut Ozal who died on April 17.

1996 — Romano Prodi, leader of the victorious Olive Tree alliance in the Italian elections, was asked to form the new government.

QUIZ

Do You Evade Reality?

Some people walk with their heads in the dreamy sky. Others are so earthbound; they can see only the soil on their toes. Escape routes from the everyday world are a necessity for mental health, but, if carried to extremes, can become a neurotic habit. How sound is your balance?

Answer Yes or No.

1. Do you envy the easy life of your ancestors?
2. Do you have a pack of old love letters?
3. When you go to bed at night, do you imagine yourself as the hero or heroine of some exploit?
4. Do you refuse to make a will or to consider death?
5. Is your reading confined primarily to fiction?
6. Are your living surroundings disorganized?
7. Do you think most traits are hereditary?
8. When out walking, do you survey the distance rather than examine the things that are close to you?
9. Normally, is it difficult for you to awaken after eight hours of sleep?
10. Do you feel that other people are primarily to blame for failures in your community, business, etc?



SCORING

Give yourself 2 points for each yes-answer.

16-20 points: You verge on losing contact with the world around you. Life, as it is, is fun and should be considered as it is. Look around you fine the honest things that are meaningful.

10-14 points: You have found a way of escaping from the things which bother you. This is as helpful a way of adjusting, provided you do not allow fantasy to blur your vision.

6-8 points: To be sure, there are ruts in the road, but when they are filled with ice, those same ruts reflect the stars. A bit of romanticism will help you enjoy life more fully.

0-6 points: As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Reality has a sliding door." Use it to get away from the tedium of everyday facts.

(Courtesy Let's Get Quizzical/Sterling)

ANIMAL CRACKERS

WAH! WAH!

I NEEDED A GOOD CRY!

PUZZLE

COMPUTER CLASS

D	E	S	I	G	N	M	R	I	N	E	E	R	C	S
A	T	C	F	I	E	U	S	R	E	D	R	O	H	C
I	A	I	A	W	T	S	O	C	O	E	V	A	I	H
L	R	S	I	U	S	N	U	M	B	E	R	J	D	O
Y	E	A	L	A	N	G	U	A	G	E	I	S	R	O
U	T	B	P	R	I	N	T	W	R	M	I	E	A	L
W	I	R	K	J	U	R	I	D	N	A	M	M	O	C
V	L	E	M	A	G	C	I	M	W	R	I	A	B	O
U	Y	T	U	P	N	I	E	I	W	G	I	L	Y	R
S	O	U	E	A	I	S	H	S	P	O	O	L	E	E
D	W	P	I	E	S	U	T	T	E	R	I	A	K	H
N	I	M	W	A	I	M	G	A	N	P	T	C	I	C
U	W	O	L	E	A	R	N	K	T	U	S	S	I	A
O	H	C	R	E	A	T	E	E	E	W	R	I	E	E
S	M	A	L	L	W	R	L	S	R	J	E	P	Y	T

BASIC	GAME	ORDER
CALL	INPUT	PASS
CLASS	KEYBOARD	PRINT
COMMAND	KEYS	PROGRAM
COMPUTER	LANGUAGE	SCHOOL
COST	LEARN	SCREEN
CREATE	LENGTH	SHOW
DAILY	LOOPS	SOUND
DESIGN	MISTAKES	TEACHER
ENTER	MODE	TEST
FAIL	NUMBER	TYPE

Answer to Last Week's PUZZLE

SUGAR AND SPICE

هكذا من الأصل

Multi-Employment Seen as Dr[illegible]

Tehran Times Service

A country going through the process of development requires the creation of new jobs that will meet its particular needs. The creation of new jobs, in fact, is seen as one of the measures for combatting unemployment. However, not all jobs rebound to the public good. In this article, that is not the concern. The point being stressed is that no matter how a nation may diversify jobs and professions for the sake of raising productivity, all efforts would prove futile unless individuals cultivate a sense of doing things efficiently which brings us to another issue faced in today's world: individuals taking two or more jobs. Such activity in day-to-day language is called "moonlighting."

"Moonlighting" is a common phenomenon these days because of the tight financial situation. People take on more than one job in a day to augment their income. While the labor laws of most countries would not prohibit "moonlighting," it has gradually turned into a matter of concern for countries that sense in their workers a growing sense of apathy towards the quality of their work. A worker who takes multiple jobs has a lesser chance of performing his job efficiently and the result is not only disastrous for him but also for his family and the company or institution that he works with. Tired workers have less concentration, energy and dedication to work. They come home without the feeling to talk to members of their family, let alone engage in some playful activity with their children or engage in intelligent conversation with their spouses. When the situation becomes routine, it causes an irreparable harm to family relations and weakens the cultural base of society.

A father who bursts into his home late and dead tired from his day's work misses a chat with his kids who may have gone to bed already and vice-versa. What is more, accidents have been prone to happen among workers who drive home dead tired from work.

There are those who rush to work early hoping to return earlier in the night, but because of the demands of working in another job have to forego the luxury that would have been enjoyed if their families had more of their time. Being on the run all the time not only causes physical and mental stress but also deprives the worker of the opportunity to develop other interests in life. Lacking the time to develop himself culturally and to enjoy life's beauty, he ends up disgruntled. People with a heavy work schedule respond to the responsibilities of life and family with less enthusiasm and are likely to age prematurely because of exhaustion and fatigue. As the saying goes, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." More important, in an effort to raise financial resources, the person who takes on two or more jobs may be sacrificing the development or upbringing of his children. Proper child development is an incentive that greatly outweighs financial losses.

What brings us to the crucial point

How can we respond to the issue in such a way as to meet the demands of cash- strapped workers halfway? Some serious measures like the enhancement of employees' job capabilities that will raise their level of pay and other fringe benefits may be taken to discourage them from getting multiple jobs. Another measure would be to liberalize company benefits to include workers in the lowest pay scales; and this includes health and recreation facilities. Of course a person who is compelled to take up several jobs to meet his economic needs should be differentiated from a person who is versatile and who is asked to render more technical services. Experts and consultants who are hired on the basis of their expertise belong to such group. The quality of their performance is usually not judged by the hours they spend at work, although mental exhaustion can be just as harmful as physical exhaustion. In this article, as mentioned earlier, we are going to examine the effects of a multi-job situation as a result of economic pressure as far as the average employee or worker is concerned.

Today it is customary in Iran to handle several jobs at the same time. Many in the workforce are in jobs with relatively little connection in skill and occupational requirements that it may be safe to predict serious individual, family or national consequences as a consequence. A survey carried out in Tehran shows a considerable percentage of government employees taking on at least two, and at most, three occupations. This situation also partly explains the high rate of unemployment that prevails in the country. The lack of proper budgeting of earnings or allocation of expenses of those who have single jobs is, in fact, the root of the problem. It is a fact that the usual tendency of those who have individual or family financial difficulties is to be a scrooge. It is therefore obvious that financial need is the main incentive for those who hunt for several jobs.

The reasons for the rise in the number of those having more than one job in this country has grown in recent years. It is to be noted that the majority of those who take more than one job are low-income government employees. Inflation, high prices, the desire to obtain the decent comforts of life such as a car, and the need to meet life's basic necessities such as food and housing are powerful incentives. Of course not all the needs of a person can ever be met in this life, but the rewards to a person who takes on more than one job are immediate and long-lasting. The fulfillment of basic needs always take precedence over other considerations such as social mores. A large number of government employees whose first-job income does not take care of their necessities simply ignore other considerations such as family welfare.

In Tehran it has been observed that just a few people live on one job. Many professionals even use their private cars to transport passengers and goods for a fee after office hours. Many act as middlemen for all sorts of transactions.

One driver was heard to have remarked that he uses his entire salary for his house rental and what he spends for his needs and that of his family comes from his extra job of providing private transportation to passengers. Moreover, he said he has two kids in the university and another one in a non-profit school which add to his financial burden. Some weeks ago the Minister of Education was heard to remark that children of most government employees study in non-profit schools. But everybody knows that schooling of children is not the major expense of most families in this country.



(Photo by Babak Foroutan)

What really causes people here to have more than one job?

An expert in social sciences declares that there is incongruity between real and nominal income. He says that when a person earns 30,000 tomans a month the real value (measured in terms of purchasing power) of this money is only 10,000. For this reason he has to take on more than one job in order to make both ends meet. Therefore, he says one way by which we can discourage individuals from occupying two or more jobs is to equalize real and nominal income.

In addition, certain segments of our society still cling to tradition and say that one person, the breadwinner, should work while other members of the family give him the needed support by doing household work. The idea is wholly desirable but against practical realities; it is an accepted fact that if each member of the family with the capacity to work took on a job, a lot of physical and mental pressure would be removed from traditional breadwinners.

Consequences

Experts agree that the very first consequence resulting from multi-job situations is damage to society. Time that should have been spent for recreation and family get-togetherness is sacrificed and the welfare of the family suffers. Many divorces have resulted from overworked families. Family relations are also affected leading to various social problems. Society suffers next with the effects of broken families and unwholesome upbringing of children. Relations turn sour. Each member thinks of himself. In the workplace, too, due to incompatibility of jobs and too much time spent in the workplace the individual suffers and his relationship with other workers strained because of too much physical and mental stress.

Another expert believes that the quality of work will decline among those in multi-job situations because the motivation is simply to meet the financial burden. As mentioned earlier, another proven effect is a slump in the job market. When one person holds two jobs the effect is that half of the qualified workforce for the other job would be jobless and would then seek other low-paying jobs.

The manager of a state-run company explains, "Since the young generation makes up most of our population there is tight competition in finding a job. On the other hand, experienced jobholders do not easily give up their jobs. Consequently, the youth have to stay jobless."

To tackle the problem a reasonable balance should be struck between income and expense. Some new jobs should be created for the youth and the age of retirement should be lowered. Some facilities like housing should also be considered by the government.

Taking on more than one job because of financial need is also the result of the financial and economic pressure brought to bear on working people whose situation in life is such that their expenditures far exceed their incomes. There may be an added source of income but the advantages are outweighed by the negative cultural, social and mental impact caused on the family, especially on the kids. If the essential needs of an employee could be met with just one job he would be discouraged from getting a second job and would have more free time with his family.

"Suitable employment helps in the development of the nation," says an instructor of the College of Psychology at Allameh Tabatabaie University.

"The high rate of joblessness endangers the society mentally, in much the same way that unemployment is blamed as "the mother of all evils.' We must deal with unemployment first if we are going to build a healthy society."

Each individual is limited in various ways and the exercise of any profession requires passing a special training course. It is then obvious that any individual who discharges responsibilities calling for different skills or capabilities may be qualified for one job but may not be so for the other jobs.

Those with more than one job are classified into two groups. First, those who handle a second job relevant to their first job and, therefore, are in a position to discharge the second job just as efficiently as the first. By taking on the second job they are said to be making better use of their free time. Secondly, there are also those who take on a second job calling for skills not in line with their first job. The logical consequence is that their efficiency in their first job, as well as in the second, is virtually reduced plus the added mental pressure that is brought about by a second job of which they do not have the proper training or skill.

An academic and a consulting psychologist believes in different situations calling for multiple employment. She says: "A psychologist may translate or write books at home and during the night after a working day in his office consulting with patients. He leads several jobs and at the same time he renders service to society. A librarian, however, who transports passengers with his car in the afternoon and works night shifts at the hospital has no skill in the (extra) jobs he does. This would only damage such individual's mental health and family relations."

A person who turns to more than one job only to improve his earnings is likely not to consider the quality of his work. We take the same librarian as an example. He is in a great hurry to finish his first job in the morning to get to the second one — transporting passengers. In this job he is unlikely to treat his passengers properly because of tension and mental stress. Then he returns hastily to the hospital to labor on his third job. There he is not also as useful as he should be because of fatigue and improper training. Dissatisfied at work, he comes home grumpy and finds neither the patients in the hospital nor his family welcome his presence.

An authority in the social sciences believes that multi-employment is related to per capita income. When income is reduced to half because of high prices, a low-salaried employee has to cope with more difficulties because of his decline in financial status. Some succumb to anti-social behavior. They turn to the commission of crimes such as robbery or embezzlement.

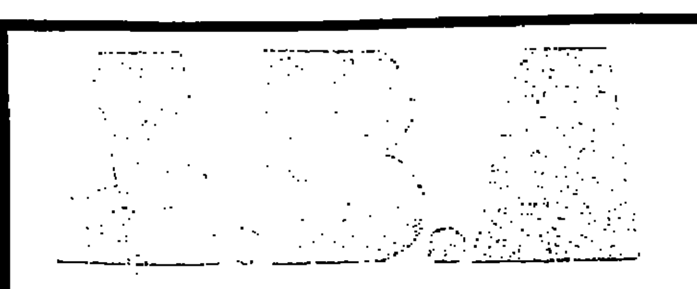
Multi-employment weakens the emotional base of the family. Kids sometimes have to dispense with parental caring and affection during their formative years. This drives them to live in an imaginary world. They create imaginary pictures of their parents which tend to replace their realistic perceptions in life with unrealistic ones. By satisfying their kids' financial needs, some parents think they can ignore their emotional needs.

According to psychotherapists, paying no attention to the emotional and psychological needs of children can cause them various problems in the future. The absence of a father at home has led kids to commit violence. Bolstered by such theories, behavioral experts believe parents taking on various jobs may unintentionally expose their children to serious psychological problems.

"My kids treat me as if I am a stranger," says Reza Hosseini, an emplyee who has more than one job. "They are always running away from me. Besides, they are declining educationally," he adds.

"Now, 3 or 4 months after I have taken on my second job, I have become more sensitive and nervous," says Kamal Mirhosseini, another employee. "I feel a certain distance from my family. I cannot take my family out, I cannot attend parties, and I cannot..."

Multi-employment is only one of the many drawbacks seen in our country these days. To solve it, reforms in economic policies and changes in behavior patterns at the national and family levels should be considered. The government, for instance, can do much to help employees financially by providing for housing benefits to employees. Measures like this would likely discourage employees from taking other jobs while encouraging them to work for efficiency and quality. A society determined to move forward requires a contented workforce—now!



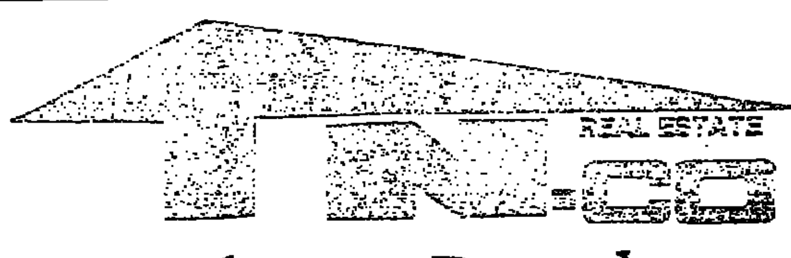
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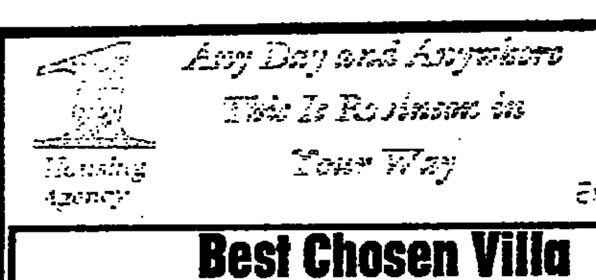
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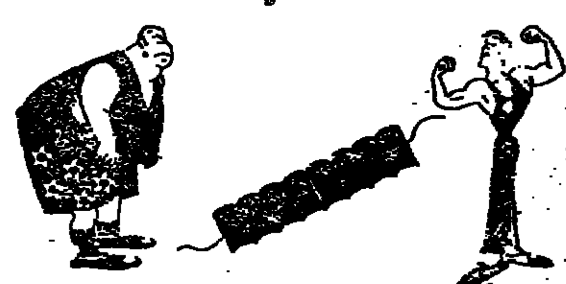
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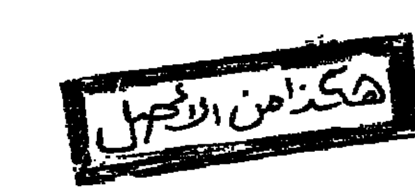
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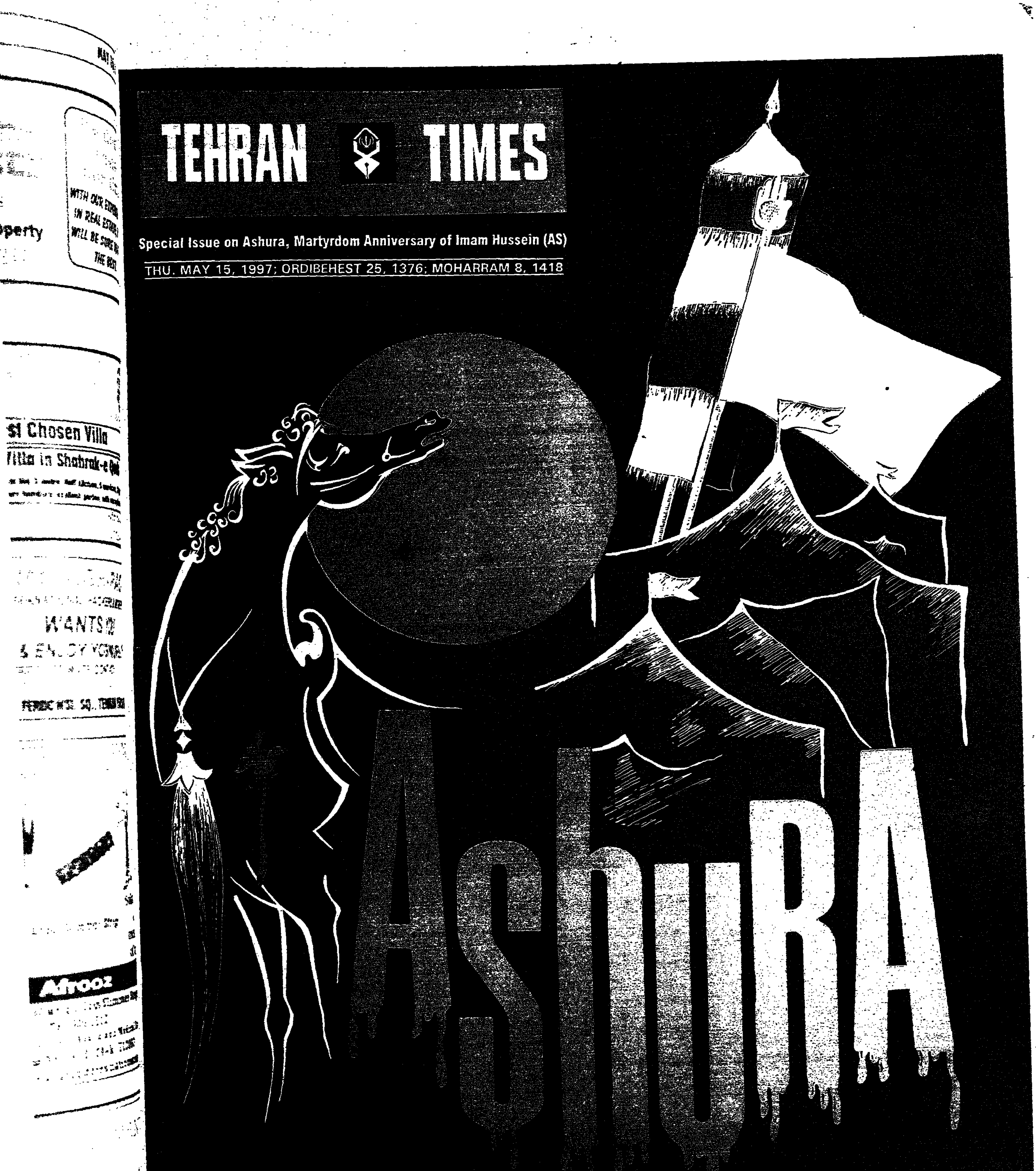
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TEHRAN TIMES

Special Issue on Ashura, Martyrdom Anniversary of Imam Hussein (AS)

THU. MAY 15, 1997; ORDIBEHEST 25, 1376; MOHARRAM 8, 1418

THE WOMAN WHO MADE A DISTINGUISHED NAME IN THE ANNALS OF HISTORY

Tehran Times Service

The month of Muharram is always considered by the Muslims as a reminder of the epic Imam Hussein (AS) and his companions created in Karbala in year of 61 Hijjra. This holy month is also associated with the memory of the beloved and sister of the Imam Hazrat Zainab, (AS) and the endurance and efforts she took in spreading the message written by the blood of the martyr of Karbala.

Hazrat Zainab's numerous virtues and sublime personality reminded one of her mother, the first lady of Islam, Hazrat Fatimah (AS) (the daughter of the Holy Prophet). (SAW).

However it was not only in the realm of virtuousness that she set forth an example as a woman, wife and mother for all the womanfolk but, whenever the time demanded for an action, dedication self-sacrifice, patience and endurance, this noble lady of Islam crystallized an ever-lasting prototype and a model in herself as well.

When she felt the time had come for her to help the religion of God by supporting the cause of the Imam of his time, Hazrat Imam Hussein (AS), this loving mother who nourished the heart of a lion in her kind bosom; did not hesitate to urge her sons to join the 72-man army of the Imam.

Even *after* he *martyrdom* of Hazrat Imam Hussin (AS), instead of confining herself to mourning of the martyrdom of the heroes of Karbala, she launched an immense campaign aiming at unmasking the corrupt regime and revealing its anti-Islamic nature to the masses who had been victimized by the misleading propaganda of that government.

It is right that it was in Karbala where the gleaming qualities of her personality were displayed most, but she had been since her childhood a target of the waves of sadness and hardships.

She was not older than seven when her beloved mother, Hazrat Fatimah (AS) passed away leaving her behind with the great responsibility of motheing her younger brothers and sisters at that tender age.

This however, was the first, but not the last in the series of such devastating blows on her young soul. In later years, she experienced another tragedy when her father, the first Imam, Hazrat Ali ibn Abi-talib, (AS) was martyred in the niche of Kufah Mosque in the year of 40 Hijjra. Another great scar was yet to come on her of the martyrdom of her brother, Hazrat Imam Hasan (AS), the second Imam. This background shows that this noble from the Household of the Holy Prophet of Islam, was not a stranger to pain, suffering and endurance. In fact, her noble soul had experienced such pains, each of which could easily knock off any ordinary souls. Probably she underwent all these sufferings just to play her historical role in the epic of Karbala.

History bears witness that she did not hesitate for a single moment in joining the (caravan) of Imam Hussein (AS) when she heard her brother was moving off Kufah. Leaving behind her house, she also urged two young sons to *join the caravan at once.*

The Imam's convoy confonted the army of Yazid in the desert of Karbala, a wilderness burning under the glowing sun and where the access of the Imam and his caravan was blocked to the Eupherates River. The thirst overtook the young children and infants among the caravan and only God knows what pains the kind heart of Zainab bore while listening the sad cries of the thirsty children dying for water.

When the battle started between this 72-man army defending piety and truthfulness and an army the number of which figured at 50,000 or so, it was Zainab who put on the combat uniforms on her young sons and witnessed their martyrdom in defending the religion of God with so much patience and endurance that can never be put on the paper. *How can any writer pen* down the emotions and feelings of a woman who observed her beloved sons cut to pieces by the most ruthless and base enemy?

*She showed no sign of weak*ness nor did she relfect the slighest ripple of grief on her face upon seeing such an unbearble scene. Her faith in God and the superstrong will she had, were enough to help her overcome her feelings. If she ever showed any sign of sadness or shed any drop of tear, history reveals it was over the martyrdom of her brother Imam, Hazrat Hussein, (AS), and his sons.

After the martyrdom of Imam who was the last among the men *of the caravan (except his son,* the 4th Imam, Ali ibn Hussein who was sick at the time) shameless forces of Yazid attacked the tents at the Imam's camp and ransacked them *in such a barbaric way* that according to narrations, they cut the ears of little girls for the sake of ear rings and finally set the camp ablaze.

While women and the children ran for shelter hopelessly in various directions and the brutal army of Yazid was busy shamelessly ransacking in jubilation a camp, whose pious defenders had fallen with slaughtered bodies here and there on the hot desert sands of Karbala, it was only Zainab who gathered the children and women and asked them to overcome their fear and emotions lest the unscrupulous enemy consider it a sign of weakness in the Imam's camp.

The caravan, however, once again started for Kufah but this time with heads of the most noble men of history atop spears and with the family members of Imam Hussein (AS) and his relatives as "captives."

The city of Kufah, under pressures of the corupt rulers and the false propaganda of the regime, had prepared itself to actually celeberate this "great victory of the Caliph against a group of apostates".

But instead of apostates who as Yazid's regime claimed, had trampled upon the divine laws of Islam by uprising against the Caliph, they saw a group of noble women and children with the young and sick *son of the Imam*, Hazrat Ali ibn Hussein (AS) (the fourth Imam) who had been taken captives and forced to travel the long journey under the burning sun on the back *of camel's with no sad*dles and in the most unpleasant way.

Upon the sight of the "Caravan of the "captives", the jubilation of the people who had come to celeberate the "Great victory" suddenly died down. Amidst the lingering silence, a murmur was heard," "O God woe unto us these are not apostates; but captives from the household of the Holy Prophet and this is his grand daughter, Zainab.' The murmur spread around and an atmosphere of shame and sadness overtook the people. In a matter of few minutes a feeling of guilt caused the audience to burst into tears and lamentation.

Suddenly a thundering voice boomeranged and travelled across the centuries to tell the story of Karbala and the epic of a woman *who brought the enemy to his* knees and established the victory of the faith and religion, although outwardly defeated.

"O you people of Kufah," Zainab's pious voice said "Are you now crying? May your tears never stop and your moaning never cease! Were you not the ones who invited *my brother to* your city but later withdrew your support of his rightful cause? Verily you brought shame and disgrace upon yourself by such an act of betrayal. What a huge load of sin and guilt you are carrying on your backs. But God, you shall cry more and will have no laughter because of what you did."

People especially the women of Kufah flocked around the camel carrying Zainab and cried: "Woe upon us for what we did to the (grand) daughter of the Messenger of God? O, Zainab, forgive us; we did not know about the guilt of our husbands and we are ashamed of what they did.

The turmoil was spreading everywhere and the situation forced the enemy to move the caravan toward the capital of Yazid, Damascus. The Houshold of Imam Hussein (AS) and Zainab (AS) arrived in Yazid's court where corrupt Caliph was on his throne among a group of his generals and foreign guests who had been invited to celeberate the "victory". *According to the narrations* the Holy head of Imam Hussein (AS) was laid on a tray before Yazid. But his jubilation and celeberation all ended when the same voice that had disturbed Kufah, *sent* shattering effects on the court. Her eloquent and strong speech appealed to the audience in such a way that even the wives of Yazid who were sitting behind a curtain, burst into tears and cursed the cruel and corrupt Caliph in front of the Court.

"O, Yazid", said the daughter of Hazrat Ali (AS), Zainab (AS), "Open your ears and listen to what Allah Almighty says in the Qoran:

"And let not the unbelievers suppose that the indulgeace (short respite) we grant them is better for them; we grant them this indulgence only that they may increase in sin and verily there awaits them a painful Chastisment for them (3:178).

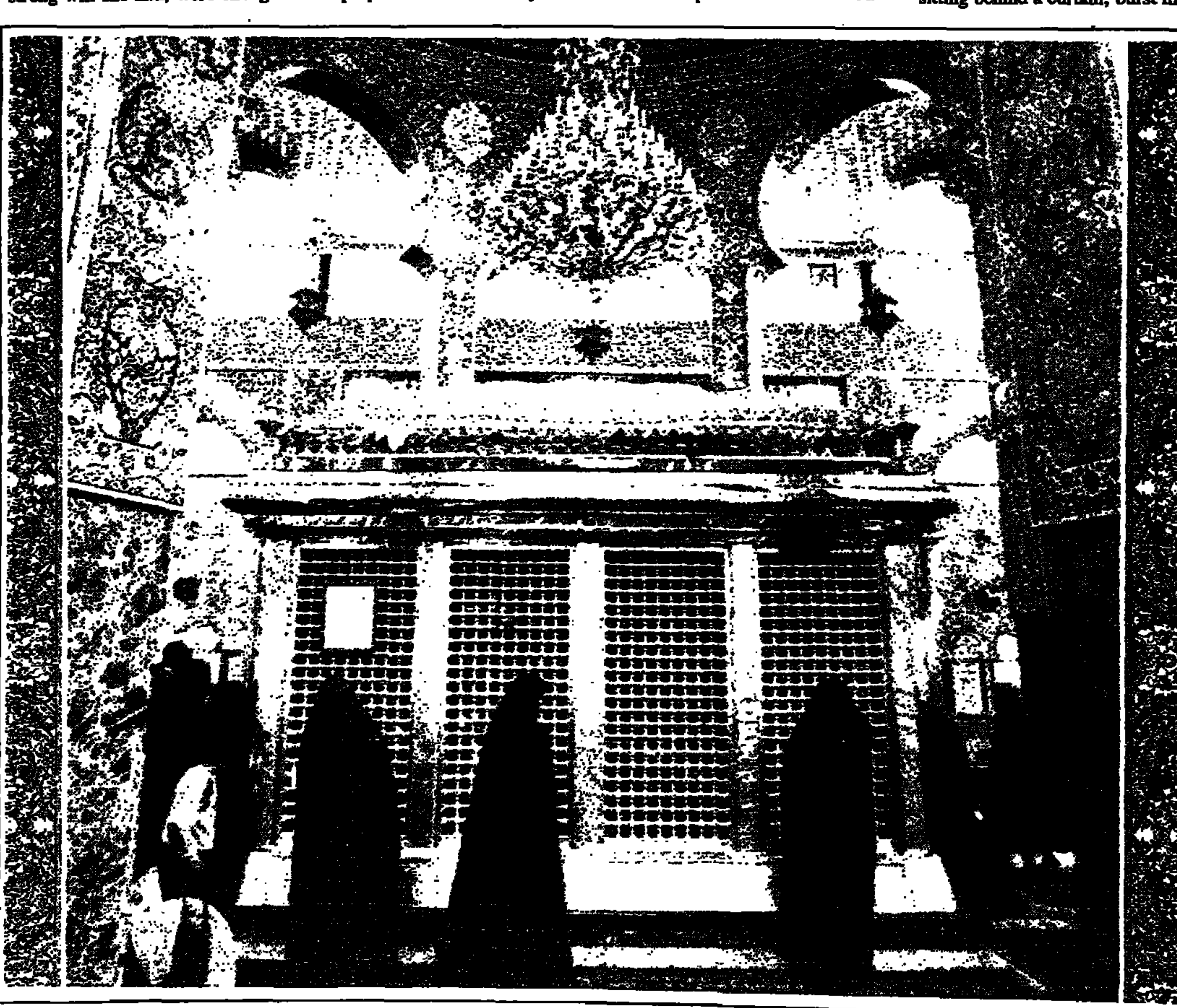
O, you the grand son of Abu Safyan! are you not ashamed of what you did to the Household of the Messenger of God? You trampled upon the sanctity of our cleansed Household and posed its women and children to the sight of the public as "captives" while your own HARIM (women) is protected. Are you now proud of the "Victory" you have gained? Do you think that if we are now here as "Captives" and you as "Victor", it means that you are dear to God? Woe be upon you! How insane you are to be glad of the most obscene act you have perpetrated.

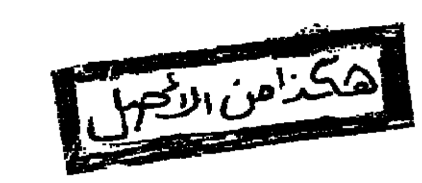
The slain bodies of our martyrs will again be put together on the Day' of Judgement to bear testimony against you. Beware not to take any delight in this superficial victory. On the Day of Resurrection you shall face the Messenger of God and the Most Sublime and Just Arbitrator shall judge your case. It is on that day that you will see who shall dwell in glory and be showered with the bounties and graces of God Almighty and who will end in the most painful punishment."

These words reaching us from beyond the curtain of over 13 centuries still reflect the unique and praiseworthy personality of the Lioness of Karbala, Hazrat Zainab (AS). The enternal victory of this "cleansed Household "can well be felt in these words delivered at the peak of eloquence and bravery in the court of one of the most corrupt and cruel rulers of history.

These words rooted in the faith Zainab (AS) had in the truthfulness of the cause of her Imam and brother Hazrat Hussein (AS) echoed throughout the Islamic world and awakened the sleeping conscience of the people.

Were it not for the sake of such speeches that Hazrat Zainab (AS) made here and there, in which she delivered the message of the oppressed Martyrs of Karbala, the cause of truth and piety would have been pushed into oblivion through the propaganda of the corrupt-regime of Yazid and no trace of the exalted and sublime values of Islam would be left to us today. This brave messenger of Imam Hussein's revolution, history reveals, fulfilled her divine responsibility in the most competent way. The way she unveiled the anti-Islamic and anti human regime of Yazid *right in his court* and when he was supposed to be the 'Victor' and she "a captive" tells us of the unique personality, that she was how can, an ordinary pen and tongu talk of what Zainab (AS) did. It was she who was the real victor even at the time when the short-sighted people and those given to the world and its emphemeral affairs thought her to be defeated.





هكذا من الأصل

May 15, 1997

Ashura Uprising in Iranian Art

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Much has been told and written on the Iranian art works, especially painting, by the Iranian and world analysts and critics. Yet, the secrets of Iranian art still remain undiscovered. Close scrutiny is needed to explore the hidden mysteries of a piece of art, though some works are expressive themselves and needless of any kind of explanation or analysis. Many such works have been recorded in the pages of history.

One such everlasting work in the history of Iranian art is "*The Eve of Ashura*", created on canvas by the Iranian creative artist and holder of the Top Model of Art, Master Mahmoud Farshchian.

If Master Farshchian, had created only *The Eve of Ashura*, and not tens of other works during his life time, again his name would have been recorded among the top artists in the history of Iranian art and culture, as is today.

The work deserved to be granted to the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS) by the artist himself.

As far as the writer of these lines is aware, this is the first comprehensive analysis published on *The Eve of Ashura* — though the work itself is expressive enough.



Mahmoud Farshchian, *The Evening of Ashura*, 1981

Plain sketches of the brim of the work associate loneliness. Also hot mid-day of Ashura is skilfully created by the fading and wilting of cheerful flowers, clad in the mist of sorrow.

The horse's bending head pictures both respect to the survivors and guides the viewers' eyes to slip from the edges to the body of the work.

The rotary state of the work and its curved lines touching one another doubles the composition of *The Eve of Ashura.*

In the whole work, there is only one eye (horse's) shedding tears for the dead, an eye witness to the martyrdom of Imam Hussein ibn Ali.

Also deep exhaustion, anxiety and fear, are shown very well on the horse: the way the animal stands on one foot and its disheveled mane, as most animals do in the same occasions; or a tail held tight between the legs which shows the fear-stricken animal.

Likewise the empty quiver, the swordless sheath, and the sagging saddle on the ground signify a sorrowful atmosphere.

One of a women's wear pair of shoe on the ground, at the bottom of the work, says its owner has walked helplessly for miles and miles on the hot sand of Neinava. Dream interpreters say, taking off the shoe is a sign of separation.

The shelterless kids who desperately grasp hard the horse's feet, emphasize the lamentable atmosphere and shattering of the elements, especially where the sketch of body is divided in two parts by the vertical line of the horse's hand.

The dusty simple tent indicates a derelict shelter.

The rotary state of rein with the horse's neck, the curvature of swordless sheath and its up-side-down design direct the viewers to a lady trying hard to keep her feet from shivering in the midst of all the calamities and the heartbreaking situation. Her pale hands and twisted fingers lament in silence of the oppression, melancholy and pain.

According to the traditions the doves sitting on the saddle, bathe in Imam Hussein's blessed blood to be the messengers of Ashura Uprising, till the seas gang dry and rocks melt in the sun.

THE GREAT ELEGY OF THE SAFAVID PERIOD

By Yusufali G. Dharsi (Dar es Salaam)

An elegy is literally a lament or dirge (marthiyah) written to commemorate the death of some person or persons. The practice of writing elegies in lamentation of the departed dear ones is a universal one. In the early period of Islamic conquest of Iran, elegies were composed and are to be found in the works of Rudaki, Mas'ud Said Salman, Nidhami, Kisai of Merv and others. But elegies concerning the martyrdom of Imam Hossein (A.S.) with which we are mainly concerned, were in the pre-Safavid period, by far and large, insignificant; It was the patronage by the Safavid kings that gave to contemporary poets the impetus of elegizing the martyrology of Imam Hossein (A.S.).

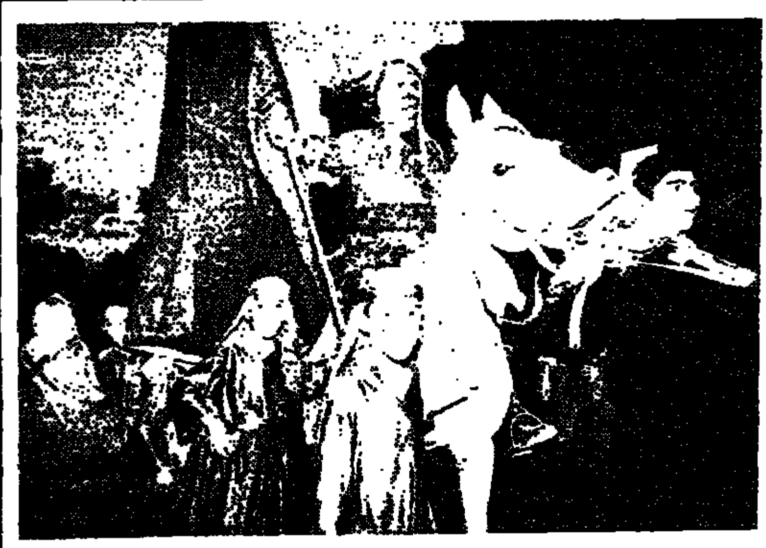
During the Safavid period there were numerous poets who extorted their talents in commemorating the virtues and suffering of Imam Hossein but of these the most eminent was Muhtasham of Kashan (d. 1588) who flourished in the reign of Tahmasp I (1524 —1576). In the heyday of his youth, Muhtasham applied his poetical skill to turning out erotic verse, but, in later life, like some others, Baba Faghani for instance, he had a change of heart and set himself entirely to devote his talents to the service of religion. This, curiously enough, came about by the rebuff meted out to him by Shah Tahmasp I who, however, in his early life had patronised panegyrists and not ony cultivated but also enjoyed their society. In his later years, however, he grew pious and became very deferential to the Ulema. Thus when Muhtasham, as was his wont, sent him two fine panegyrics, one in the king's praise and the other in praise of the Princess Pari-Khanum, they were rejected and, according to Dr. 'Abdullah Razi, "the poet was advised not to compose such poetry and more but to use his skill in turning out marathi (threnoids or elegies) concerning the sufferings of the immaculate Imams' (1). Thereupon, Muhtsasham composed his celebrated haft-band or poem of seven-verse strophes. The poem in twelve strophes, commemorates the martyrdom of Imam Hossein. This received instant royal recognition and achieved immense popularity.

The Dream of Muhtasham

However, Muhammad Hassan 'Ilmi in his anthology of marathi attributes the success achieved by Muhtasham to Amirul Mu'mineen, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib who, on certain occasions, helped him in perfecting his elegiac compositions. The dream related by Muhtasham himself runs thus; "When I had composed the fifth strophe (of the Elegy) I stopped after writing the following stanza:

(Mistaken imagination fancied that this dust (which had arisen when the head of Imam Hossein fell on the ground and the breeze carrying it to Medina went up to the seventh heaven) had even reached the skirts of the Creator's glory). The text thus remained incomplete. At night I saw Mawlal Mawaali Hazrat 'Ali iben Abi Talib in a dream who asked me why I had not proceeded further. I replied that having composed the above stanza I had come to a dead end and nothing would occur to me to finish it. He told me to recite the following:

(For although the Essence of the All-glorious is exempt from vexation, He dwells in the heart, and no heart remains unvexed)"(2)



Muhtasham's Elegy

Muhtasham's Elegy portrays sentiments of lament so forcibly that the reader cannot but feel the pangs of grief when the scene of blood and death is visualized by him. It also evokes intense sympathy for the fallen hero of Kerbala. The sense of grief is heightened when, in the eighth strophe, Fatima Zahra appears and is described giving vent to lamentation on seeing the decapitated blood-dripping head of Hossein. Pointing out to her father, the Holy Prophet, she wails in a chillying note, saying: "This is Hossein!" When the scene flashes before the mind its impact on one can be more imagined than described.

Whilst discussing Thomas Gray's Elegy (Written in a Country Churchyard) which, incidentally, is one of the most perfect and widely known poems in the English language, Sir Ifor Evans quotes the following memorable words of the celebrated Dr. Johnson in appreciation of the poem: "The 'churchyard' (Elegy) abounds with images which find a mirror in every mind and with sentiments to which every bosom must return an echo." I believe this judgment on Gray's elegy is more than true of Muhtasham's, Indeed while the latter commemorates the unique martyrdom of Imam Hossein, the former was written about no one is particular.

Zahra Iqbal (Namdar) in her paper on Elegy in the Qajar Period writes: "There is no doubt that with Mawlana Muhtasham of Kashan and his twelve-stanza elegy (tarkib-band) the art of elegy reached its highest point up to the Safavid period. In the Diwan of Muhtasham there is another ode in memory of Imam Hossein and there are some other eulogies; but non is on a par with his elegy.

This poem achieved a fame and popularity upon its publication that no other elegy has ever attained to the present day, nor perhaps ever will. It remains one of the masterpieces of Persian literature. Even now in decorating halls for Passion plays (ta'aziyah) and the assemblies of high mourning, its verses are inscribed vertically on hangings attached to the pillars and horizontally under the ceiling, and even on the walls. There is virtually no assembly of significance unadorned by such quotations.' (4)

It was natural for the poets after Muhtasham to follow in his footsteps and produce their elegies similar to the one by Muhtasham just as there has been a host of imitators of firdawsi's Shah-Nameh and Sa'di's Gulistan without, however, achieving much success. Muhtasham's classical Elegy has remained inimitable and none of the elegies composed after his has attained that peak of fame which Muhtasham's did.



Tehran Times Service

AFTER the martyrdom of Imam Ali (AS) the aggressive action — which Moaviyah a cunning man who was in pursuit of his selfish ends, had under taken during Imam Ali's caliphate—still continued.

Though Moaviyah left no stone unturned to materialize his ignominious plots, yet he failed to achieve his objectives due to a rising popular tendency towards Islam. Determined to carry out his plots, Moaviyah resorted to numerous satanic ruses and by taking advantage of people's religious sentiments he distorted Islamic values and to some extent managed to stabilize his caliphate. It was the very hypocritical policies of Moaviyah which misled the people of Sham (Syria) to the extent that they were unable to distinguish between the truth and falsehood.

At the same time, the people of Kufa who were (Imam) Ali (AS)'s followers had submitted themselves to the prevailing conditions which deterred them from taking any measure against the ruling regime. In such circumstances, there were, however a few committed Muslims who appealed to Imam Hussein (AS) to rise against Moaviyah in order to put an end to his depraved regime. Like his brother Imam Hassan (AS) who, for the sake of Islam, had reluctantly made peace with Moaviyah, Imam Hussein (AS) also did not revolt during the caliphate of Moaviyah and called on his followers to be patient until the right time came.

Apart from the prevailing political situation which hindered Imam Hussein (AS) from rising against Moaviyah, people had also got tired of war and preferred to continue their deadly silence in the face of the increasing pressure exerted on them. Though the most fervent among the Shi'ites including Hojr ibn Adi, could no longer remain silent and set out raising voice against the ruling regime, they were either martyred or their uprising was nipped in the bud without any fruitful results.

Under such circumstances, Imam Hussein (AS) was left alone in his struggle against the tyranny of the ruling regime. The people did not exhibit any willingness for a war against Moaviyah and at the same time they could not tolerate the oppression committed by the Bani Ummayids.

Imam Hussein (AS) was greatly concerned over the distressing condition which could certainly lead to the restoration of the Jahelliyah (Ignorance) period. He witnessed how Muslims were subjected to the opressions of the ruling regime. He deplored the fact that Shiites (followers) of Imam Ali (AS) had submitted themselves to the usurpers at the cost of their dignity and honor. He was completely aware that Moaviyah sacrificed Islam in favor of his heinous plans with the help of treacherous traditionists who supported him by fabricating false narrations, Imam Hussein (AS) was greatly irked to see that the creeping policy adopted by Moaviyah was being enforced to compel people to forget Islamic values and return to Arab nationalism.

Though Imam Hussein (AS) did not consider the condition to be ripe for a revolt, yet he spared no effort to enlighten the people through his preaches The more he tried to awaken people against the ruling regime the less success he gained, since his preaches had the least effect on the peole who had submitted themselves to the suppressive regime of Moaviyah.



He was then convinced that there remained no alternative but to rise against the corrupt ruling caliph even at the cost of his own life.

POLITICAL SITUATION AFTER THE DEATH OF MOAVIYAH

Moaviyah whose days were numbered, did his utmost to force Imam Hussein (AS) to take an oath of allegiance to Yazid, or at least make him keep silent, in the face of Yazid's corrupt regime. For he had ascertained that Imam Hussein (AS) would not enter into a war against him under the imposed circumstances, but would surely entice people against Yazid after his death. Historians have narrated controversies between Imam Hussein (AS) and Moaviyah in numerous cases. One such dispute can be clearly seen in the following letter:

"Your letter implies that you try to introduce Yazid as a perfect man capable of ruling over Mohammad's Ummah. You intend to deceive people by instilling doubt in them. It appears that you are trying to introduce an unknown man whose personality is known only to you, though Yazid's behavior suffices to reveal his devil picture. And you had better go after your own business of playing with dogs, and quenching your carnal desires by drinking, singing and dancing than trying to introduce him". However Moaviyah died and Yazid who, according to Imam Hussein (AS) was a devil incarnate, ascended the throne. Now that Moaviyah was dead, the condition was ripe to struggle and rise against Yazid. Yazid's evil life and his irreligious practices greatly contributed to speed up the trend of the revolution.

IN MEDINA

The moment Yazid ascended the throne of Damascus, he ordered the governor of Medina, Al-Walid ibn Utbah, to exact allegiance from Hussein and other opposition leaders, and to behead anyone refraining from taking on oath of allegiance to Yazid.

Walid invited Imam Hussein (AS) to his residence. Imam who had learned of Moaviyah's death, was aware of the idea behind Walid's invitation. To avert any probable threat, he took a number of his loyal followers with him to support him if necesary. Walid put forward Yazid's order with Imam Hussein (AS) but Imam retorted:

"A person like me does not take an oath of allegiance in private and my secret allegiance will also not be deemed sufficient. When you invite the people enmasse for allegiance also call me'.

Walid who seemed not to have been satisfied with Imam's response insisted on Imam's allegiance to Yazid. Imam once again retorted:

"O governor, we are descendants of the house-holds of revelation... Yazid is a drunkard and depraved person, with whom I will never unite in allegiance. However, the passage of time will prove who deserves allegiance".

With this outright statement, Imam Hussein (AS) dashed any hopes for compromise. He not only warned them that peace with a depraved person was meaningless, but also taught them and the later generations a lesson of freedom and stead-fastness. He taught the world that a free and faithful man should never submit himself to a usurper, but should instead continue struggle unti final victory. By this announcement Imam Hussein (AS) declared his uncompromising stance to Yazid and his supporters as the first step towards an open revolt against the ruling regime.

IMAM HUSSEIN'S CALL

Imam Hussein (AS) proclaimed his call for an open revolt against the corrupt ruling regime. Through his letters, messages, preaches and meetings he called on the public to rise against the depraved regime of Yazid. He expressed the motive behind the need for an upheaval as follows:

"The idea behind my call for an upheaval against the ruling regime is beyond any personal ambition as my chief pursuit is to save Muslim Ummah from going astray. By this move I intend to follow the practice of Prophet Mohammad (S) and Imam Ali (AS).

Then every one has the option of either accepting my call and being blessed by Allah or refusing it and receiving the wrath of Allah'.

Imam Hussein (AS) wrote this message in a letter to his brother Mohammad ibn Hanafiyah in order to let people know of the main idea behind his call for an open revolt which was but to the best interests of the Muslim Ummah. He urged the public to rise in order to revive the social and cultural values of Islam. With this in mind he called on all the believers to support him in the cause of Islam and Qoran. Imam Hussein (AS) did not mind even if all the people opposed him. He was assigned by God to combat against tyranny and there was no other course open to him but to fulfil his divine duties.

According to the Holy Qoran Almighty Allah commands His Messenger to say 'I preach only one thing to you that you stand up in pairs or singly for God; then consider there is no madness in your companion'.

In this verse, God urges the faithfuls to revolt against tyrants in groups in order to accelerate the final victory. If it cannot be afforded, the faithfuls should rise without the help of others for an individual can by himself constitute the foundation of an Ummah.

Thus scarcity in numbers or lack of support should not deter one who is firm in his decision from rising against corruption and tyranny, in the cause of Allah. God will also bestow his blessings on those believers who are martyred in His cause.

After his call in Medina, Imam Hussein (AS) departed for Mecca in a bid to urge the public for a divine revolution against all vestiges of corruption.

IN MECCA

In late Rajab when Mecca hosts large numbers of Muslim Hajjis (pilgrims) from vrious parts, Imam Hussein (AS) emigrated to Mecca. People who learned of Imam's Hejrah (emigration) greeted him warmly and pledged their support for him. Imam Hussein (AS) seized the opportunity to preach and let the people knowof the ailing political situation. He told them that a tragic situation was awaiting them unless they rise against the ruling regime.

Imam's arrival to Mecca caused great controversies among people in mecca. People of Mecca and pilgrims from other regions who had heard of Imam Hussein's intention expressed their deep hatred towards Yazid and his clique.

In his "Al-Badaya wa Al-Nahayah" Ibn Kathir says, "Imam Hussein (AS) emigrated from Medina to Mecca where people listened to his sermons and spread his message to other places.

Yazid, who was extremely frightened of the situation in Mecca, called his advisors. In a private meeting with them, Yazid decided to kill Imam Hussein (AS) even if he was to take sanctuary in Kaaba. Imam Hussein (AS) who had learned of Yazid's malicious plot, decided to leave Mecca in order to keep the sanctity of Kaaba on one hand and on the other to give a fresh momentum to the pace of revolution.

One day before his departure, he called all the pilgrims to warn them against the ailing situation. In this gathering he preached a historical sermon in which after advising people to virtue and piety, he said that he was determined to leave Mecca to stage a crusade against the ruling regime.

"O people! do not hesitate to accompany us if anyone of you is ready to sacrifice himself in the cause of Allah, because if God willing, I would leave cause of Allah, because if God wills, I would leave here tomorrow".

Thus, on Yowm-al-Tarwiyah (eighth day of Zilhaj, when pilgrims prepare themselves for Hajj rituals), Imam changes the Hajj rites to an individual Umrah and leaves Mecca for Iraq.

IN KUFA

There are several evidences introducing Kufa to be the most proper place for an open revolt against Yazid and his clique; because, the majority of Shi'ites live there and Imam's followers who have tolerated the deplorable situation since the time of Moaviyah warmly welcome Imam's intention for an uprising against Yazid and seemingly, they are prepared to support him.

The chieftains each separately write to Imam Hussein urging him to emigrate to Kufa as the focal point of Shi'ites and a proper place for struggling against tyrants to administer justice.

Apart from the chieftains, Imam's loyal followers also write to him appealing to save them from the injustice inflicted on them.

"O Imam Hussein! people are impatiently.awaiting you and have nothing to do but follow your decision, hurry to Kufa.

O Imam Hussein! time is ripe, trees have given fruits and it is hightime to harvest the fruits. If you are inclined to revolt, do not hesitate to join us since a powerful army is ready to support you in the fight.

DEATH IN HONOR IS FAR MORE PREFERABLE THAN LIVING IN HUMILIATION

Not only Shi'ites, but also the leaders of Khavaarej (those who broke their oath of allegiance to Imam Ali (AS)) and other groups wrote letters to Imam saying "Time is ripe for an upheaval and we are all ready to sacrifice ourselves in your cause, and that a powerful army is ready to welcome your arrival".

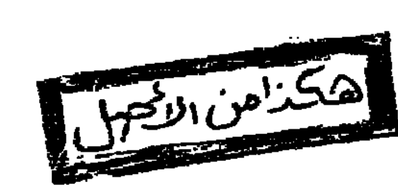
Then why did the Kufians fail to abide by their promises? What happened to the alleged powerful army which was supposed to support Imam Hussein in his revolt against Yazid? Why did they rise against the Imam rather than support him?

According to some historical evidences, a number of loyal disciples of Imam Hussein (AS) were martyred before the arrival of Imam to Kufa in the course of Muslim ibn Aqil's upheaval. On the other hand, Yazid appointed one of his most depraved men, Obeidollah, as the governor of Kufa to mercilessly suppress Shi'ites of the Imam and silence any freedom-seeking voice. At the same time there were some people who had abondoned their religious belief for personal ambitions and greeds by rising against the Imam. In fact, they traded religion for their carnal desires. Amid the people of Kufa there were only a few devotees who sacrificed their lives in the cause of Imam Hossin (AS) and set a brilliant example for the human generation.

ON THE ROAD TO KARBALA

Despite all threats, Imam departed from Kufa to respond the enthusiastic and fervent call of his followeirs who had promised to support him in his revolt against the ruling regime and liberate the Muslims from the tyrannies of the

(Contd on Pg. 5)



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May 15, 1997



TEHRAN TIMES

Imam Hussein (AS): Great Sacrifice on Altar of Divine Love

usurpers. Muslims accompanying the Caravan of Imam Hussein (AS) unaware of the tragic events destined for it were all hopeful of its victorious.

It was generally believed that the people of Kufa would rise in support of Imam Hossin (AS) to over-throw the depraved regime of Yazid. They were unaware of the plots hatched by the enemies of Islam to confront Imam Hussein (AS) and his disciples in order to hinder the sweeping spread of Islamic values by killing the Master of Martyrs.

On his way to Kufa, Imam sees a member of Bani Assad asking him about the conditions in Kufa.

He says the people of Kufa are wholeheartedly devoted to us; however, power and swords are in the hands of Bani Ummayids. Instead of being discouraged, Imam sends Qais ibn Mosahhar Saidavi with a letter to pronounce Imam's final statement.

Qais is arrested by Ibn Ziyad's mercenaries and put to severe torture to confess the message of Imam's letter. Qais has, therefore, to tear up Imam's letter and swallow the pieces.

Ibn Ziyad asks him:
"Who are you?
— I am a Shi'ite (follower) of Imam Ali.
— Why did you tear up the letter?
— To keep the secret written in it.
— What was written in the letter? -It was written by Imam Hussein to a group of Kufa people whose names I do not know.
— I will not release you unless you disclose their names or you humiliate and insult Imam Hussein and his father in public.

— As to your first demand I will never disclose their names, but I am ready to meet your second demand.

Qais appears in public. While everybody's attention is focused on him, he voices out:

"O! people, Hussein is the son of Ali as one of the best servants of God. His mother is Fatemah, the daughter of Mohammad (S). I am his messenger coming to you. I warn you that Obeidollah, the son of Ziyad is a liar. Damn him and his father."

Once Qais is through, he is martyred by Yazid mercenaries who could not tolerate his outright allegiance to Imam.

Shortly afterwards, Imam learns of the martyrdom of Muslim ibn Aqil, Hani ibn Orvah and Abdollah ibn Yaqtar. Imam who tries to patiently tolerate the tragic martyrdom of his best and loyal disciples addresses his companions."

"I heard of the martyrdom of three of my best supporters. Our Shi'ites failed to support us. Now any one of you is free to leave without any hesitation."

By saying this he, in fact, warned those who were after worldly desires insinuating that only martyrdom was awaiting them.

"Then anyone who is seeking martyrdom can accompany us in the cause of Allah and those seeking carnal enjoyment can leave us."

KARBALA

On the second day of Moharram, the Caravan of the Master of Martyrs arrives in Karbala. On his arrival in Karbala, he once again preaches to people and reveals outright the motive behind his uprising:

"Don't you see how truth is trampled and injustice is not prohibited. Then it is incumbent on the faithful to hasten towards his God in such circumstances, preferring death to living with the oppressors."

At this juncture, Imam Hussein (AS) reiterates that the main objective behind life is but dignity and honor and that he has come to Karbala to preserve their dignity and honor through an open revolt against the oppressors. Man should always endeavour to preserve his dignity not submitting to oppression; otherwise, living without such pursuit will be meaningless. Death in honor is far more preferable than living in humiliation.

In another sermon, Imam Hussein unmasks the truth and proclaims outright the prime objective behind his being in Karbala. He addresses his enemies: "I swear by God that I will never surrender to you and shall not escape like slaves"

By this instructive statement, Imam expresses the motto of his revolution. He warns his enemies that he will continue his mission to defend Islam though there are a few to support him, and will sacrifice his life for the mission.

By using these statements, Imam Hussein taught people a lesson of bravery, dignity, honor.

steadfastness, and true faith. He, in fact, revived the school of Islam by his heroic martyrdom. It is due to this very fact that the Prophet Mohammad (S) said "Hussein is from me and I am from Hussein."

"O Master of Martyrs! bless our combatants in the Karbala of Iran and beseech God to bestow success on the combatants of Islam in their march toward achieving final victory.

Imam Hussein (AS):

There is nothing between you and death except a wink; hence, before you leave this world, try to do something which will stand you in good stead in the day of resurrection.

Imam Khomeini (RA):

The news of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS) cover an account that he had seen the Prophet (S) in a dream. The Prophet (S) had told Imam Hussein that, "There is a station assigned for you in Paradise, you will not achieve it unless you are martyred."

Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei:

When Imam Hussein (AS) rose against the despotic ruler of his time, he envisaged two different fates for himself and his companions: attaining martyrdom; or achieving victory and establishing an Islamic system.

Ashura: Symbol of [illegible]

Tehran Times Service

The issue of Ashura and the rise of Imam Hussein (AS) in Karbala led Muslim scholars to develop various interpretations regarding the nature of this movement and its impact on Muslim polity and culture and its role in changing and moulding the history of Islam.

Numerous books have been written on the issue of Ashura, but most of them fail to touch the chief objective of this movement.

Ayatolla Murtaza Motahhari went to the root of the matter and demonstrated the role of this movement in Muslim society.

Himasah-e-Husseini (The epic of Hussein) is the name of his book in three volumes, published by Sadra Publications in Tehran.

The first volume of the book comprises three parts, and the first part comprises four articles on the distortions of the Karbala episode.

These articles are speeches delivered by Martyr Motahhari on different occassions.

The second part of the book comprises three articles under the title of "Himasah-e-Husseini" (Epic of Hossein). The third part comprises seven articles on the element of propagation in the movement of Imam Hussein (AS).

In this part the element of propagation in the movement of Imam Hussein (AS), in particular, and propagation in Islam, in general, was discussed.

The second volume contains four parts and the first part also comprises four articles on the idea of enjoining the good and forbidding evil in the movement of Imam Hussein (AS).

The other articles of this volume are: "Slogans of Ashura," "Analysis of the Episode of Ashura", and "Nature of the Movement of Imam Hussein."

The third volume of the book comprises ten chapters. In this book Martyr Motahhari tries to deal with the historical roots of the episode of Karbala and the nature of this episode.



In the third chapter he studies Imam Hussein (AS) and the Prophet Jesus (PBUH). At the end of this book he does a critique of Dr. Ali Shariati's book, "Hussein Vareth-e Adam" (Hussein, Adam's Heir) and "Shahide Javid (The Immortal Martyr) by Nematollah Salehi Najafabadi.

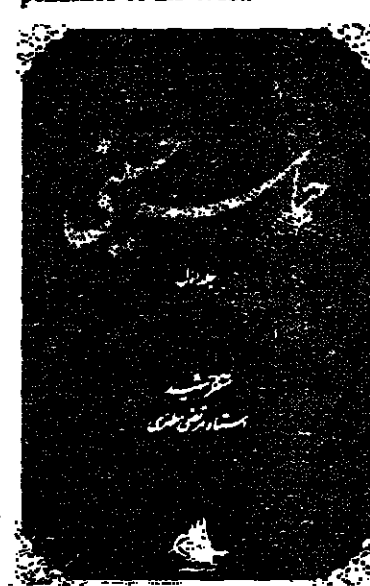
The main thrust of this book is that Imam Hussein (AS) should be considered an epic hero, and we should try to highlight the bright perspective of the episode of Karbala, for Imam Hussein's epic aspect is a hundred times greater than its wicked profile. He is of the view that Imam Hussein (AS) should not be assessed with reference to the crimes and atrocities inflicted upon him. It is true that Imam Hussein was martyred through being beheaded by Shimr. But the martyred Imam is a symbol and, consequently, he lives on. Mutahari says that Bani Umayydd were under the impression if they killed Imam Hossein (AS), everything would be burried with him, turning into dust and ashes.

What Ayatollah Motahhari points out is that people should mourn and shed tears for Imam Hussein (AS) as a living epic hero who sought to enforce justice, reinstated the rights of the downtrodden and strove for the continuity of the line of thinking of the Prophet (SAW). Motahhari believes that we should weep for the fallen hero as he was, for he dedicated his life to the promotion of the ideals of the society. Wailing for a miserable, feeble and weak person is meaningless. One should weep for a hero so as to attain the qualities of the epic spirit in oneself. He should develop a sense of justice, instill in his soul hatred against tyrants, endeavor to work for the freedom of the barefooted, promote humane values, and, finally, fight to preserve the dignity of mankind.

In the first volume of the book "Himasah-e Husseini, Motahhari writes that my knowledge about Imam Hussein (AS) is that his personality is an epic history full of determination, resistance, and truth. He left a few words which signify the greatness of his soul. In one instance, Imam Hussein (AS) was asked by his companions to narrate something from the Prophet (SAW). He replied by quoting a saying from him: "God likes great works and dislikes wickedness".

What is significant here is the choice of the saying. The selection reflects Imam Hussein's (AS) great soul. The martyrdom of Imam Hussein (A.S) imbued a new life to the world of Islam. Following Imam Hussein's (AS) marlyrdom, we observe that the Ummah's home and dignity were reinstated. Socieites thrive on dignity, independence, ideals, ideology and philosophy, which are regarded as the best assets. Without those norms they become sick and begin to wither.

Imam Khomeini's success in bringing about the Islamic Revolution in Iran, and, through it, influencing the entire Muslim world, lives in the fact that he made the Ashura movement a continuing process in human history for evolving a better society that could safeguard the principles of justice, social equity and cultural independence of the West.



Motahhari concludes that Muslims should view Imam Hussein's (AS) movement as a great Islamic and epic movement, rather than a sorrowful and sad event. It brings about courage, valor and dynamism among Muslims.



The shifting sand-dunes of Karbala were smeared with blood. Near one of such dunes, on the bank of Alkoma, lay the prostrate figure of a youth with blood gushing out from innumerable wounds. The crimson life-tide was ebbing fast. Even so, it seemed as if he was anxiously expecting somebody to come to him, to be near him before he breathed his last. Through his parched throat he was feebly calling somebody. Yes, Abbas was anxiously expecting his master to come to him before he parted with his life, as he had come to the side of all his devoted friends who had laid down their dear lives for him and in espousing his cause.

It is said that before a man's death all the past event of his life pass before his mind's eye in a flash-back. In his last moments Abbas was experiencing this. He was seeing himself as a child in Medina following Hossein with a devotion which was considered unique even for a brother. He was seeing the events of that hot and sultry day in Kufa when his illustrious father Ali was addressing a congregation in the mosque and he, as a child, with his characteristic devotion, was looking at the face of his beloved brother watching him intently so that he *could attend to his wishes on an* instant command. Seeing from the parched lips of Hossein that he was feeling extremely thirsty, how he had darted out from the mosque and returned with a tumbler full of cool, refreshing water and in the hurry to carry the water as quickly as possible to quench the consuming thirst of his dearest brother, how he had spilled water on his own clothes. He was recalling how this incident had made his illustrious father stop in the midst of his speech, with tears rolling down his cheeks at the sight of his young son all wet with water. He was remembering his father's reply to the queries from his faithful followers as to what had brought tears in his eyes, that Abbas who had wetted his body with water in the process of quenching Hossein's thirst would in the not too distant future wet his body with his own blood in attempting to quench the thirst of his young children. He was vividly seeing the scene on the 21st Ramazan, way back in 40 Hijra, when his father mortally wounded, was lying on his deathbed and entrusting his children and dependents to the care of his eldest brother, Hasan- all except him. Seeing that his father had commended all but him to the care of Hassan—how he, a child of 12, had burst out into uncontrollable tears. His father, on hearing him to his side and given his hand in Hossein's hand with the words: "Hossein, this child I am entrusting to you. He will represent me on the day of your supreme sacrifice and lay down his life in defending you and your dear ones, much as I would have done if alive on that day." How his father had *turned to him and affectionately* told him: "Abbas, my child, I know your unbounded love for Hossein. Though you are too young to be told about it, when that day dawns, consider no sacrifice too great for Hossein and his children." He saw before his mind's eye that parting with his aged mother Fatima in Medina. How she had affectionately embraced him and reminded him of the dying desire of his father to lay down his life in the defence of Hossein and his dear ones.

A faint smile of satisfaction filckered for a brief moment on his parched lips-a smile of satisfaction that he had fulfilled his father's wish; that he had performed his duty for which he was brought up. It just flitted for a moment and vanished as other scenes came before his mind's eye. He was reliving the events of the night before. He was seeing Shimr *stealthily coming to him* and talking to him about his ties of relationship; about the protection he had been promised for Abbas by the Commander of Yazid's forces, only if he would leave Hossein and go over to Yazid's camp; about the promises of riches and rewards that he would get; how he had spurned the suggestion of Shimr with the utmost disdain to the chagrin of that servile minion who had sold his soul for a mess of pottage. How he had scared away that coward by his *scathing rage saying:* "You worshipper of Mammon, do not think that Abbas will be lured by your tempting offer of power and pelf. *If I die* in defending my master, Hossein, I shall consider myself the luckiest person. O coward, remember that valiants die but once. Nobody is born to live eternally. By betraying my master, you have betrayed the Prophet, whose religion you profess to follow. On the Day of Judgement you will be doomed to eternal perdition. I am ashamed to own any relationship with you. Had it not been for the fact that you have come here unarmed, I would have given you the chastisement you deserve for your impudence in asking me to become a turncoat." How that wretch had scampered from there seeing him roaring like an enraged lion! The thought of that unpleasant interlude contracted his brows. Or was it the excruciating pain he was suffering on account of the deep *gashes he had all over his body?*

Yet another scene passed before Abbas's eyes - Sakina leading 42 children, each with a dry waterbag. The children were shouting as if in chorus - "Thirst, consuming *thirst, is killing us." Sakina coming* to him and putting her dry water-bag at his feet and saying to him: "O uncle, I know you will do something to get water for us. Even if you can bring one bag full of water, we can wet our parched throats." He could see that thirst, aggravated by the scorching heat of the desert, was squeezing their young lives out of them. The sight



of these youngsters had moved him more than any other soul-stirring events of that faithful day. How he had picked up the waterbag with assurance to Sakina that he would go and bring water—God Willing. How he had taken *Hossein's permission and* marched out of the camp with a sword in one hand, the flag in the other, and the bag on his shoulder, with the children following him in a group up to the outer perimeter of the camp! How Hossein had repeatedly requested him to avoid fighting as much as possible and confine himself to the task of bringing water!

His thoughts swiched over to the events that had preceded his fall from the horse. With the object of procuring water for his dear little Sakina, he had charged on the enemy who held the river banks. He had run through the enemy ranks like a knife through butter. *Against his surging* onslaught the cowards could not stand and had run helter-skelter shouting for protection. For a moment it seemed as if Ali, the *Lion of God, ha* descended from heaven. In no time Abbas was near the rivulet. He had jumped down from the horse and bent to fill the water-bag. When it was filled to the brim, he had taken some water in his cupped hand to drink and satisfy his killing thirst. But, on second thoughts, he had thrown the water away. How could he drink water when Sakina and the *children were still withering without it?* How could he be so callous as to forget that his master Hossein had not had a drop of water since the last three days! He had turned to his horse which had been let loose so that it could satisfy its thirst. The animal had been intently looking at its master as if to say: "I too am aware that, so long as our master and his children remain without water, our thirst cannot be quenched."

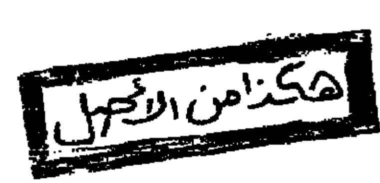
With the water-bag filled he had jumped into the saddle with one thought uppermost in his mind - to get the water to the anixiously waiting children as quickly as possible. *Seeing him galloping* towards the camp of Hossein, the enemy had turned. Somebody had shouted from the enemy ranks that if Hossein and his people got water, it would be difficult to fight them on the battlefield. Though it ws an uneven *fight*, he fought them with valour which was so characteristic of his father's. Though he was thirsty and hungry, he charged on them and scattered them. The mercenaries of Yazid were running like lambs in a fold when charged by a lion. Seeing that a frontal assault on a man so brave was not possible, they had resorted to a barrage of arrows. When arrows were coming from all sides, Abbas had only one thought in his mind - how to protect the water-bag than his *life.* Seeing that Abbas was preoccupied with this thought, one treacherous foe, hiding behind a sand-dune, had rushed out and dealt a blow on his right hand and cut it off. In a flash Abbas had transferred his sword to his left hand and the standard he was bearing he had hugged to his chest. Now that the lion of Ali was crippled, the foes had found courage to surround him. A blow from an enemy's sword severed *his left* arm. The odds were now mounting against him. He held the bag with his teeth and protected the flag with his chest pressed on the horse's back. Now the paramount thought in his mind was to reach the *camp somehow or the other.* A silent prayer had escaped his lips: "Merciful Allah, spare me long enough to fulfil my mission." But that was not to be. An arrow had pierced the water-bag and water had started gushing out of it. Was it water that was flowing out of that bag or the hopes of Abbas? All his efforts had been in vain. After all Sakina's thirst would re*main unsatisfied and all her hopes* would be frustrated. The enemies who had made bold to surround him, now seeing his helpless condition, were now gathering thick round him. One of them came near him and struck a mortal blow with an iron mace. He reeled over and fell from the horse.

He tossed on the burning sand with excruciating pain. He felt that life was fast ebbing out but his wish to see his master had remained unfulfilled. With one last effort, with all the strength that was left in him, he shouted: "O my master, do come to me befor I die." As if in answer to his *prayers he felt some footsteps near* him. yes, his instinct told him that it was his lord. His one eye had been blinded by an arrow and the other filled with blood and so he could not see. But he felt his master kneeling down beside him, lifting his head and taking it into his lap. Not a word was said for a few seconds because both were choked with emotion. At last he heard Hossein's voice, a half-sob, half muffled cry: "Abbas, my brother, what have they done to you?" If Abbas could see, would he have recognized his master? With back bent and beard turned white and hoary, on hearing the parting cry of his beloved brother, Hossein's plight was such that nobody could have recognized his - such was his transformation. Abbas was now feeling the loving touch of his master's hand. With effort he muttered: "You have come at last, my Master. I thought I was not destined to have a last farewell with you but, thank God, you are here." With these words he put his head on the sand. Tenderly Hossein lifted his head and again put it on his lap, enquiring why he had removed it from there. "My Master," replied Abbas, "the thought that when you will be breathing your last, nobody will be there to put your head in a lap and to comfort you, makes me feel that it would be better if my head lies on the sand when I die, just as yours would be. Besides, I am your slave and you are my master. It is too much for me to put my head on your lap." Hossein burst into uncontrollable tears. The *sight of his brother,* whose name was to become a byword for devotion and unflinching faithfulness, laying down his dear life in his arms, was heart-reading.

Abbes was heard to whisper softly: "My master, I have some last wishes to express. When I was born, I had my first look at your face and it is my last desire that when I die, my *gaze* may be on it, too. My one eye is pierced by an arrow and the other is filled with blood. If you will clear the blood from my one eye, I'll be able to see you and fulfil my last dying desire. My second wish is that when I die you may not carry my body *to the camp. I had promised* to bring water to Sakina and, since I have failed in my attempt to bring her water, I cannot face her *even* in death. Besides, I know that the blows that you have received since morning have all but crushed you and carrying my body to the camp will be hart-breaking work for you. And my third wish is that Sakina may not be brought here to see my plight. I know with what love and affection she was devoted to me. The sight of my dead body lying here will kill her."

Hossein sobbingly promised him that he would carry out his last wishes added: "Abbas, I too have a wish to be fulfilled. Since childhood you have always called me master. For once at least call me brother with your dying breath." The blood was cleared from the eye, one brother looked at the other with a longing *lingering* look. Abbas was heard to whisper: "My brother, my brother" and with these words he surrendered his soul to his Maker: Hossein fell unconscious on the dead body of Abbas with a cry: "O Abbas, who *is left to protect me and Sakina* after you?".

The flow of Furat became dark as winter and a murmur arose from the flowing water as if to protest against the killing of a thirsty water-bearer on its banks.





The Night of Tragedy

A thick pall of dust was hanging over the battlefield of Karbala as the sun was setting. The events of that day, the carnage and massacre of saintly souls had cast a gloom on that desert tract. An eerie silence was prevailing which was from time to time broken by the sound of drumbeating to celebrate the victory — the hollow victory achieved by a host of well-fed, well-equipped soldiers against a handful of brave warriors, tormented by three days of thirst and hunger, each of whom had fought every inch of his ground and displayed valiance which has remained unparalleled in the annals of mankind.

When the beating of drums had stopped, the desert wind carried the sound of wailing from tents pitched on a hillock, tents which had been plundered and burnt, tents which had been ransacked, looted and pillaged. These ramshackle tents were the remains of Hussein's Camp. The moaning sound that was coming from them was of the ladies and children of the Prophet's house who had suffered untold hardships and indignities at the hands of Yazid's mercenary minions. Not long after the ruthless killing of Hussein, Yazid's soldiers had marched on the camp where the defenceless ladies and helpless children of Hussein and his devoted followers stayed and, with ruthlessness and savagery which only these barbarians were capable of, had robbed them even of wearing apparel. There was not much that they could lay their hands on. The son of Ali and Fatima was not accustomed to worldly luxuries and what they found in his camp sorely disappointed them. The coarse clothes they could get had only immense sentimental value for the ladies and children who were deprived of them, because many of them had been woven by Fatima with her own hands. The small wooden cradle which they took away had inestimable value for Ali Asghar's mother, because it had associations with the child who had died a little while ago in his father's arms, with his throat pierced by the arrow of Hurmula.

The widows and orphans who had, during the short space of a few hours, lost all their dear ones were brutally beaten and lashed by the ruthless marauders. Not satisfied with their heartless brutality, the enemy set fire to the tents. What a holocaust it was! A young child was seen rushing out of one of the burning tents with his clothes aflame. One of the enemy soldiers, seeing his pitiable condition, came to his help and put out the flames. The child looked at him with surprise because he had not expected to find even a spark of human feelings in the brutes who had come to inflict tortures on them. Seeing that he was somewhat different from the others, he sobbed: "O Shaikh, when you have been so kind to me, do me one more favor and show me the way to Najaf." The man was very much surprised at this request. He replied "Najaf is far away from here; in fact it is several leagues from here. But tell me, why you want to know the way to Najaf?" The child innocently replied: "I want to go to the tomb of my grandfather Ali in Najaf and tell him what your people have done to us—how our men have been butchered; how our ladies have been whipped. I want to tell him how the earrings were snatched away from the ears of Sakina, my cousin, and how she was left bleeding and in pain."

Zainab, who was now in charge of the camp, according to the last wishes of her beloved brother, did not know what to do. Should she ask all the ladies and children to perish in the consuming fire rather than suffer the indignities they were subjected to? Whose counsel and advice could she take in this hour of trial, for Ali, the ailing son of Hussein, was lying unconscious on the bare floor of one of the burning tents? Even the mat on which this young Imam was lying had been snatched away. Zainab had no alternative but to turn to Ali Zainal Abedeen who, though seriously ill, was the only person whose decision in such a crucial matter could be followed. She rushed to him and shook him hard saying: "O my brother's son, as our Imam I appeal to you to tell us what we should do in the present trying circumstances. Shall we remain in the tents and allow ourselves to be devoured by the fires that are raging or go out of the tents into the open?" Zainab, "My aunt, it is our religious duty to do all we can to save our lives. We must all leave the tents and go out into the open, however unpalatable it may be to us." On hearing this Zainab and Kulsum led all the ladies and children out of the burning tents. She helped Ali Zainal Abedeen to go out into the open.

Soon the fires raging in the tents subsided. Only one tent remained though partly damaged by the fire. The ladies and children salvaged whatever they could of their meagre belongings and huddled together in the remnants of that one tent which afforded them some shelter.

With the advent of the night the moon appeared on the horizon. It appeared tinted with red. Whether it was due to the effect of the dust that was hanging heavily in the atmosphere or whether the silver orb was red with anger at the atrocities that were perpetrated on the innocent people of the Prophet's house, it is difficult to say. The thirsty children, who were still without water, were going out of the tents to open their mouths in vain attempts to catch the dew that was falling in tiny drops. But such was the heat radiated by the sand that even the dew drops were evaporating in the atmosphere.

The base and despicable instincts of Amr Saad and his subordinate officers were not gratified even with the inhuman tortures they had inflicted on the widows and orphans in Hussein's camp. They were assembled to consider how they could further satisfy their thirst for revenge. Someone from them suggested that the bodies of the martyrs from Hussein's camp should be trampled under the hoofs of horses after they had given a burial to their own dead soldiers. This suggestion led some persons from the tribe of Bani Asad to get up and protest that they would not permit the body of any of Hussein's followers from their tribe to be defiled in this manner. Others got up and similarly objected to such treatment being meted out to the corpses of Hussein's companions belonging to their clan or tribe or in any way related to them. Amr Saad seeing the opposition decided that only the body of Hussein would be trampled under the feet of horses. For this purpose horses were shod afresh and the brutes carried out their purpose. There was not a soul amongst them to say that, though Hussein was not related to him, he was the Prophet's grandson and his blood relationship with the Prophet deserved better consideration, if not in life, at least in death. Not one amongst them had the decency to say that the Prophet of Islam has expressly enjoined on them not to desecrate or defile even the corpses of the fallen foes who had died in battle against the Prophet. When Zainab and Kulsum, the loving sisters of Hussein came to know that only Hussein's body was singled out for this barbarous defilement, their grief and sorrow knew no bounds. But what could they do in their utterly helpless predicament?

The night was progressing slowly, as if time had come to a standstill. Though exhausted, hungry and thirsty, Zainab realized that she had to perform the duties which now had devolved on her because the illness of Ali Zainal Abedeen, the only surviving son of Hussein, had become aggravated by what he had endured. She called her sister Umme Kulsum to her and told her that they had now to look after the orphaned children, according to Hussein's last wishes, in the best manner they could. They both decided that they would first count all the children to see that none of them was lost in the wilderness during the pandemonium that had prevailed as a result of the arson, and after that, they both would, by turn, keep vigil outside the tent.

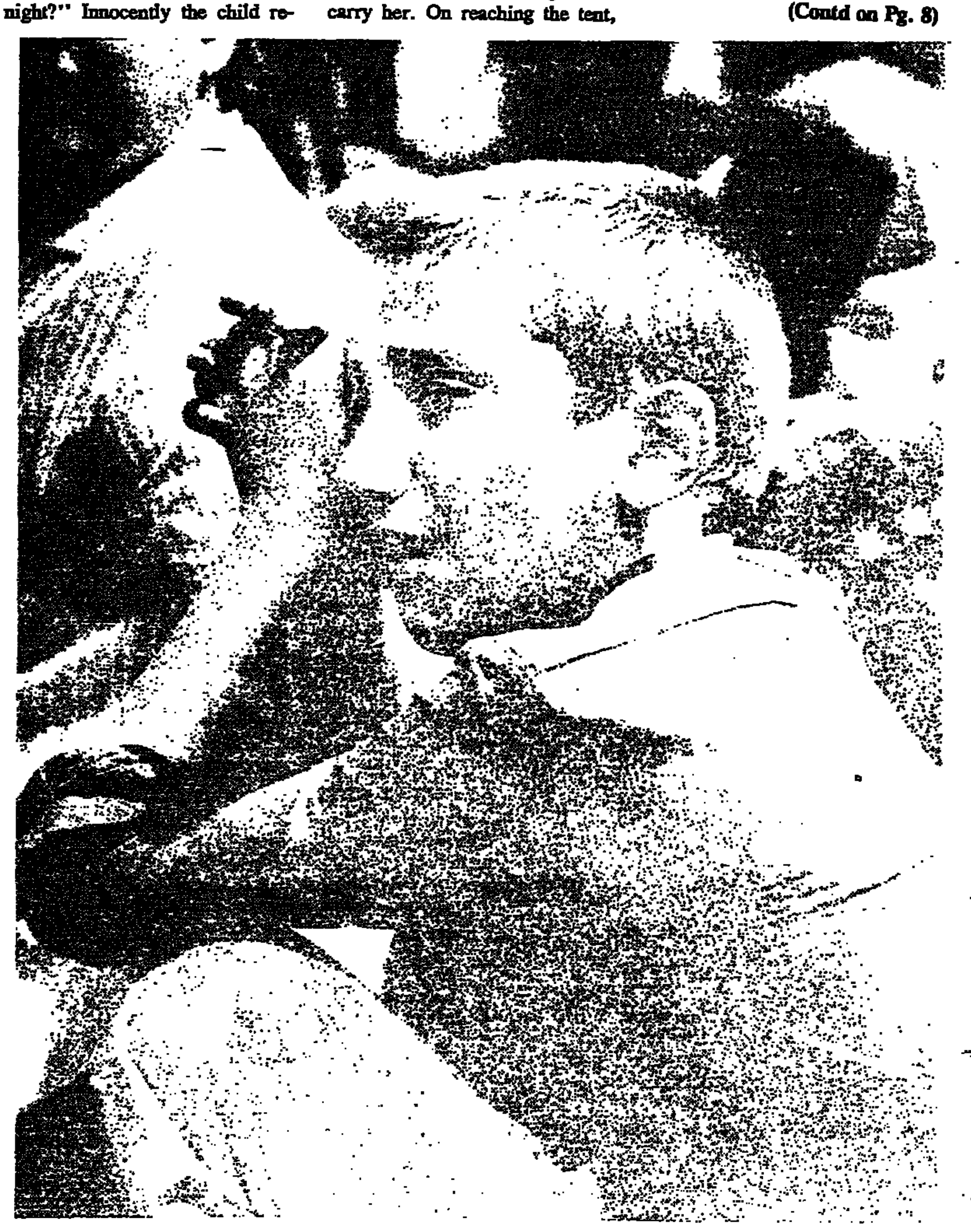
Zainab called all the children to her and started counting and identifying each of them. They found that one child was missing. To her horror and dismay, Zainab found that Sakina, the beloved daughter of Hussein, whom he had particularly requested her to look after, before marching out for the last time, was not there. In the dark night, dimly lit by the pale moon, Zainab and Kulsum started the search. In vain they were looking hither and thither but no trace of Sakina was found. With every minute of her vain search for Sakina, Zainab's anxiety was increasing. She knew not where to look for her. She was shouting: "O Sakina, my darling, tell me where are you? Where shall I look for you in this limitless desert?" The echo of her voice was the only reply she was getting. In utter frustration she turned to the place where the body of Hussein lay. Running towards Hussein's body she cried: "Hussein, my brother, I cannot find Sakina, your own darling child, whom you had left to my care. Tell me, brother, where shall I look for her in this wilderness?" As she came near the body, the moon, which had been hiding behind dark cluds, came out and lit the surrounding area with its pale beams. She saw Sakina clinging to the dead body of her father and sleeping with her head rested on his chest. For a moment Zainab thought that the child had passed away, being unable to bear the torments she was subjected to since her father's martyrdom. Slowly she came near the child and gently cried: "Sakina, my child, I have come here after searching for you all over this desert." The girl opened her eyes. Even in that dimly lit desert Zainab could see that Sakina's eyes were swollen as if she had cried her heart out embracing the body of her beloved father. She gently picked her up in her arms and said, "Sakina, tell me what made you come here. My child, how could you find your father's beheaded body in this dark night?" Innocently the child replied. "O aunt, I was seized by an irresistible desire to tell him that his dear Sakina had been robbed of the earrings which he had so lovingly presented. I wanted to tell him that the man had not even cared to take them out but snatched them away, tearing my ear lobes. I wanted to tell him that when I cried with pain, I had been mercilessly slapped by that beast." The child continued sobbing: "When I left the tent I was running aimlessly in the desert shouting, 'Father tell me where you are lying. Father, Sakina wants to come to you and tell you about all the sufferings she has endured since you left her!' I felt that the wind brought a moaning cry from this direction, as if my father was replying to me: 'Sakina, my own Sakina, come here, come here.' I came running in this direction and I found my father lying here. Zainab, my aunt, I narrated to him all that I had endured; all that you and everybody else had suffered since our parting with him. My narrating everything to him lightened my heart and I felt an urge to sleep on his chest, for the last time, as I had been sleeping so often when he was alive. So I kept my head on his chest and slept till you came to awaken me."

Hand in hand with Sakina, Zainab returned to the camp. Much as she had felt like remaining there near Hussein's body and pouring, her full heart before him, as Sakina had done, she could not do so because she was conscious that her sister Umme Kulsum and Sakina's mother were waiting for her and Sakina, with fear and hope. She hurried back to the camp as fast as her tired legs could carry her. On reaching the tent, she put the exhausted child in the mother's arms with a request to put her to sleep. For Zainab there were other duties to perform and a vigil to keep outside. It was not so much a thought of protecting any precious belongings, for, of these there were none; it was with the intention of requesting any possible intruders not to disturb the children, the hungry and thirsty children who were one by one falling into sleep of sheer exhaustion.

She had hardly come out of the tent when she noticed that a group of people were advancing towards the burnt out camp. Their figures were silhouetted by the flame-torches they carried. Zainab was beside herself with rage at the callousness of these intruders who, she thought, would not even permit the children the little rest which sleep afforded them. She hurried towards these persons and, when she was within hearing distance from them, entreated them to go back. "If you have come with the object of looting us," she said, "I can tell you that your people have not left with us anything of value. Our children have gone to sleep and your vandalism will awaken them. If at all you want anything, come in the morning. We helpless women and children cannot escape from your clutches during the night."

A lady, who was accompanying the group, replied to her in a very polite way. Zainab was surprised at the respectful tone in which that lady was addressing her: "My lady, we have not come to take away anything from you, for we know that what you have said is true and there is nothing left with

(Contd on Pg. 8)





(Contd From Pg. 7)

you. We have brought some food and water for your children and the bereaved ladies of your camp."

Nothing could have surprised Zainab more than this reply. The people from Yazid's army, and the lady accompanying them, had now reached Zainab's tent. She could see in the flickering light of the torches they were carrying, that what the lady had said was correct. Some of the men were carrying on their heads large trays containing bread; others had in their hands pitchers full of water. What emotions this sight of water evoked in Zainab's wounded heart can be better imagined than described. For this water each and every one of her kith and kin, her sons, her nephews, her brothers and Hussein had craved till death, but not a drop was given to any of them. She controlled herself and took the lady into the tent.

Try as she would, Zainab could not recognize this lady who was the only one from the enemy's side to have spoken so kindly and respectfully to her since that evening. So she asked her who she was and what had induced her people to relent by sending food and water. The lady replied: "My lady, I am the widow of Hur, who last night came over to your brother Hussein from Yazid's army and died this morning fighting bravely in defense of your brother. My husband was a general in Yazid's army, commanding a thousand soldiers. When some of the soldiers of Amr Saad realized that all of you would perish due to hunger and thirst, and they would not be able to take you before Yazid according to his command, they decided to depute me to carry the food and water for you."

As soon as Zainab heard that her visitor was the widow of that brave warrior who had turned his back on the world with disdain to defend her brother Hussein, and laid down his life fighting most gallantly, she offered her condolences to the widow. "O sister," she said, "we are all indebted to your husband for laying down his

The Night of Tragedy

precious life in defending Hussein. He was our guest, but alas! he came to visit us at a time when we had nothing left to offer him. May God grant you patience to endure you bereavement." Hearing this, Hur's widow replied: "My lady, I know not how I can offer my family." She brought the trays of bread and water-jugs and placed them before Zainab.

Zainab was reminded of the parting wish of her brother. Just before leaving, he had told her that, if she got water after his death, she should first offer it to Sakina. With a beaker full of water she went over to where Sakina was sleeping and woke her up saying: "Sakina, my child at last there is water for you. Get up, my child, and wet your parched lips and throat with this refreshing drink."

Sakina got up from her sleep and looked at her aunt. With childlike innocence she asked: "Dear Aunt, you too have remained thirsty for days. Why did you not drink it first before waking me up?" Zainab replied with a lump in her throat: "My child, it is usual to give food and drink to the youngest first. Since you are the youngest here, I have brought it to you." Hearing this, Sakina took the beaker filled with water from Zainab's hands and ran out of the tent. Zainab rushed out after her shouting: "Sakina, tell me where you want to go in this dark outside." The child replied: "I am taking the water to my brother Ali Asghar, who is sleeping amongst the dead. Did you not tell me that it is usual to offer such things to the youngest? Ali Asghar is the youngest amongst us. I know he did not get a drop of water, for, when Father brought his still body, soaked in blood, from the battlefield, my mother had anxiously asked him whether any of the soldiers of Amr Saad had taken pity on his condition and given him water. Father could not say yes in reply to this question; he could only hang his head down with tears rolling down his cheeks. My mother and I understood that Ali Asghar had died thirsty. I cannot forget how my young brother was running his dried tongue on his parched lips since this morning. 'O Aunt Zainab, now that water is available, let me give it to him."

This innocent reply of Sakina brought before the eyes of everybody the scene of that morning, with the child Ali Asghar's tragic quest for water. All of them wept bitterly recalling the memory of that infant who had perished with parched lips. Controlling herself Zainab caught hold of Sakina and said: "Sakina, Ali Asghar had been given water in heaven by your Grandfather and he is no longer thirsty. Let him sleep the eternal sleep of death from which nothing can wake him up. See, your father, your uncle Abbas and your brother Ali Akbar, have not tasted the water from the cool springs of heaven because they would not touch it so long as you, my child, remain thirsty. Drink it, my child, drink it so that those who are waiting in Heaven for you to quench your thirst, may also taste the water of Kausar." Sakina silently took the beaker from Zainab's hands and drank the water with hot tears rolling down her cheeks. Was she recalling how her uncle Abbas had gone out to fetch water for her, this same water which was now available to her to drink as much as she wanted, never to return?

All the children were served food and water after waking them up from their tired sleep. Can it be imagined how the ladies of the house of the Prophet partook of the food and water with the memory of their dear ones dying without any food and water, still lingering in their minds and eating up their hearts like cankers? The children were put to sleep again. Zainab asked all the ladies to sleep and undertook to keep a watch outside so that, if any intruders came, she could warn them. In spite of the protestations of the other ladies, Zainab would not agree to sleep and let them keep the watch. "It was my brother's wish that, after him, I should assume all the responsibilities of this caravan of captives. I must fulfill the responsibilities that have now developed on me according to his wishes," she said with a tone of finality.

Zainab was now making rounds of the tent with a half burnt tenpole in her hands. She was sometimes looking towards the morgue where lay the corpses of all her dear ones, Ali Akbar, Qasim, Aun and Muhammad, and others. Sometimes she was looking in the direction of the river where lay the body of her brother Abbas. Often she was looking in the direction where lay the body of her dearest Hussein. She was recalling how her brothers, nephews and sons had tenderly looked after her from the day she had started from Medina on the ominous journey and what a helpless and hapless state she was finding herself in, when they were all gone forever. With these thoughts she turned in the direction of Najaf where her father Ali lay buried. To her mind came the memories of the days spent by her in Kufa when her father, as the Khalif, was having his seat in that town. With what respect she was treated in those days by these very people who had not in the least hesitated to hurl insults and ignominy at her on this day! How they had vied with each other in attempts to humiliate her? Her head was reeling with these thoughts. She swooned with the grief which had become unbearable for her. In her unconscious state she saw one person galloping towards the camp as if he was coming from a long distance and wanted to reach there post-haste. His face was covered by a veil. In her trance she felt that he was coming to torment the widows and children and so she shouted at him to halt. In her feverish delirium she entreated him not to disturb the ladies and children who were sleeping. She felt that her requests were not heeded by the rider. Burning with wrath she rushed towards the rider, caught hold of his reins and shouted at him: "O Shaikh, I am supplicating you to turn back and not to disturb us in our present predicament, but you are not listening to me. I am the granddaughter of the Prophet of Islam and daughter of Ali and Fatima. Have you no regard for the Prophet and his family that you are treating my earnest requests with such scant respect?" In her unconscious state she saw the face of her father Ali, with deep sorrow depicted on it. She heard him burst out into tears and say: "Zainab, I have come to take over from you the duty of guarding the widows and children of my Hussein, his kinsmen and companions. O Zainab what have those forces of evil and oppression done to you all?" Zainab felt as if she must unburden her heart to her father. "O Father, how late you have come! Where were you when my Ali Akbar and Qasim, Abbas and others fell in the battlefield? Where were you when your Hussein's head was mercilessly severed from his body without giving him a drop of water? Where were you when Sakina's earrings were snatched away mercilessly and when she was brutally slapped by Shimr? Where were you when Yazid's soldiers snatched away our veils and set fire to our tents?" These outpourings of her heart were shaking her body in convulsions. She regained consciousness to find that she was there alone lying on the desert sand with her clothes wet with the tears flowing from her eyes. The dawn was breaking at that time. Ali Akbar had given the call for prayers and how the morning prayers were offered in congregation by Hussein and his devoted followers! She shook off her tears, did substituted ablution on the sand and began her morning prayers. Her morning prayers finished, she laid down her head in prostration and prayed: "O Allah, give me strength to bear the woes that I have to face. Give me fortitude and patience to bear the insults, ignominies and indignities which are to be inflicted on me-O Thou Who art the Source of all Power and Strength."

A Landmark in Islamic History

Hossein's martyrdom is a landmark in the history of Islam. It is a tragic event of the early Islamic society. Believers have been mourning it since that time. However in addition to expression of sorrow, it has also been a source of courage for them. It has prevented them from reconciling with the institution of monarchy which had replaced the Islamic form of government. As a result they, from time to time, fought against the despotic kings and tried to establish the Islamic form of government, for which Hazrat Imam Hossein had laid his life.

The model of this form of government was established by the Holy Prophet himself. It, as mentioned in the following verse of Qoran, was based on the mutual consultation of the believers:

'And whose affairs are decided by counsel among themselves.' (Surah al-Shura *'the Counsel'* — *38*)

This system guaranteed equal basic rights to all the subjects of the Islamic State. It eliminated all forms of exploitation from the Islamic polity which eventually proved a blessing for the humanity. But after the reign of the first four celebrated Caliphs of the Holy Prophet, monarchy succeeded to replace the Islamic form of government. However the salient features of the Islamic form of government were still fresh in the minds of their believers and was not possible to ignore all the teachings of Islam altogether. The majority of the believers insisted that as envisaged in the teachings of Islam, the new rulers must get oath of fealty from all the believers. Yazid bin Moaviya had to face a similar situation. Although a large section of the population, to save the Muslim polity from the international conflicts, had obliged Yazid, the new ruler, but a number of the prominent Companions of the Holy Prophet, refused to take oath of fealty for him. Imam Hossein was one of them.

The monarchy, after establishing itself firmly, began to usurp all the basic rights of the people. Despotic governors in the provinces took undue advantage of this situation and started oppressing the people for their ulterior aims. The oppressed people naturally looked for help towards these Companions who had refused to take oath of fealty for Yazid. They did not disappoint them. Imam Hossein promised to help them. But the despotic kings and rulers who survive on their intelligence system are never unaware of the political developments in their countries. Yazid was promptly informed about the mission of Hazrat Imam hossein. He managed this affair in such a way that created difficult situations for the Imam.

To disperse the masses who had invited the Imam, Yazid planted his own men among the people of Iraq. These planted men succeeded in scattering the group of the people who had invited the Imam to Iraq. When the Imam reached his destination, he, instead of his supporters, found a huge army of Yazid waiting for him. However instead of this deceit, the Imam did not give in but, instead, decided to fight the huge army of the enemy with the help of the small group of his kith and kin accompanying him. He fought with courage and eventually sacrificed his life and the lives of the dear ones for upholding the cause of Islam which was so dear to him.



This type of sacrifice of one's life is held in high esteem by almighty Allah. He equates death of a believer as a result of such a sacrifice equal to eternal life. In this respect the Holy Qoran commands the believers as under:

'And call not those who are slain in the way of Allah 'dead' Nay they are living, only you perceive not.' (Al-Baqarah 'the Cow'— 154) This verse contains the philosophy of 'Shahadat' in Islam. Due to this philosophy, it had always been inspiring the believers throughout the ages. They in various periods of history had been trying to establish the Islamic system of life revealed by Almighty Allah. Sometimes they succeeded in their attempts and on occasions they failed to achieve materially but their martyrdom was never wasted. It always proved a beaconlight for the succeeding generations and they continued their struggle for the establishment of the Islamic system of government. It prompted hundreds of thousands of believers to sacrifice their lives for the cause of Islam in every period of Islamic history. Even in the time of the decline of the Muslims, it greatly helped in the survival of the Muslim Ummah.

The western colonial powers had conquered almost all the Muslim countries in the eighteenth and the nineteenth but in spite of their superior military power, they were still afraid of the Muslims on account of their belief in the institution of Shahadat. They feared that if at any time some popular leader of Muslims reorganized them in the light of the philosophy of Shahadat, they would topple their government. To save themselves from such a situation, they acquired the services of dishonest Ulema who tried to convince the Muslim masses that Jehad was an out-dated institution and should be discarded in this modern age. But the Shahadat of Hazrat Imam Hossein always reminded the believers of their duty of restoration of Islamic order established by the Holy Prophet. As a result they did not pay any attention to the Fatawas of these hired Ulema. From these details it can be concluded that Shahadat is a great asset of the Muslim Ummah and eventually it will help in establishing the Islamic order on the face of this earth.

